

# THE DIAL

OCTOBER 1927

## MY REMINISCENCES OF TOLSTOY

BY IVAN BUNIN

*Translated From the Russian by Alexander Kaun*

PRACTICALLY all my life I have loved him passionately, and I regard it as my great good fortune to have seen him several times.

Chekhov once said to me (in his usual way: quite unexpectedly): "Mark my word: with Tolstoy's death everything will go to the devil."

"Literature?"

"Literature too," he answered.

This was in the Crimea. Chekhov had driven that day to Gaspra, to visit Tolstoy who was convalescing from typhus. Again and again he said while getting ready for the trip:

"I am terribly nervous; I don't know that I want to see him. There is no one I feel afraid of, but he makes me tremble! Just think: it was he who wrote that Anna saw how her own eyes shone in the dark!"

It took him about an hour to decide what trousers to wear. In the excitement of dressing he became youthful, dropped his *pince-nez*, and in his accustomed manner of mixing earnestness with jocularly emerged from the dressing-room now in one pair of trousers, now in another.

"No, these are indecently narrow," he said. "He will think I am a fop, a Chekhonte."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Translator's note: The pen-name under which Chekhov wrote his early humorous trifles.

Back he went to put on a different pair, and came out laughing: "No! These are as wide as the Black Sea. He will think I am impertinently at ease."

He returned from Gaspra still more excited. Choking from laughter he related:

"A wonderful, an amazing old man! I sat by his bed for a long time listening to his talk of this and that—and me among other things. Presently I rose to take leave. He kept hold of my hand, and said unexpectedly: 'Embrace me'; then kissed me, and moving his lips to my ear of a sudden, rattled off in a rapid old-mannish voice: 'And yet—I cannot stand your plays! Shakespeare was a rotten playwright, but you are even worse!'"

That same evening he said, gloomily and gravely:

"Mark my word, with Tolstoy's death everything will go to the devil. . . . You know him more than I—be sure to write down your impressions. Just think how we envy those who saw Pushkin in person!"

When did I learn of Tolstoy's existence? In any event, quite early. As a child even I had a certain conception of him, not through reading his books, but from conversations about him that I had overheard at home. Incidentally, I recall my father's humorous accounts of how some of the landlords in our vicinity read *War and Peace*: one would read only *War* and another only *Peace*, that is, one would leave out everything which concerned the war, another—just the reverse. Even then my feeling about Tolstoy was not simple or uniform. Father had many passions and failings—he neglected the estate, was extravagant, drank, gambled, hunted for weeks at a time. Once in a while he justified his conduct by referring to Pushkin or to Turgenev:

"God alone is without sin. Now Pushkin could not make himself write a line without a bottle of champagne, and was altogether a terrible *bon vivant*, a gambler, a duellist—quick-tempered as gunpowder. In a word, he and I are birds of a feather."

Or:

"And what kind of landlord was Turgenev? For months at a stretch he would go hunting, then flit from one Paris to another. I am at least expert at managing an estate, and he couldn't tell A from B in that line."

He would talk too, about Tolstoy:

"I knew him slightly," he would say carelessly. "We met during the Crimean War, at Sebastopol. Another fine bird for you! He couldn't see a deck of cards without getting excited!"

I remember that I looked at my father with envy and respect: he had seen Tolstoy in person!

Why did I have such feelings about a man of whose work I had not read a single line? The fact that he was a writer was sufficient for me. From my very childhood I regarded writers as beings apart; and involuntarily, unconsciously I felt for them a peculiar adoration, a kind of ecstatic admiration, an inexpressible emotion which to this day I am unable to understand or adequately define; just as I cannot say how, when, or why I became a writer myself. And I find it as impossible to answer this as to explain the fact of my own existence. When it was decided (as it somehow was of its own accord) that I should be a writer, life in a world inhabited by poets, by creative minds, became a second nature to me. But, indeed, I do not recall precisely when I began to read Tolstoy, and how it came about that I placed him apart from all others. One suddenly discovers sometimes with amazement some fine and precious thing. This did not happen in my relation to Tolstoy: I recall no such moment. Generally speaking, I do not think that any of the fine things I encountered during my childhood, boyhood, and youth, ever came as a surprise to me; on the contrary, I felt as though I had known of them for a long time, and it remained for me only to rejoice in meeting them. Such, for example, were my first encounters with the mountains, and with the sea. I recall how from the window of the train at Sebastopol, at the first glimpse of the bay so superbly blue in the early morning mists, I was profoundly moved and began trembling in true exaltation. But there was not the least amazement in my pleasure for it was I repeat merely the joy of coming upon something loved and long familiar—an integral part of my own existence. It was in this sense that I came to the writings of Tolstoy at my first reading.

Then for many years I was genuinely in love with him, in love with nearly every line of him, and with the man himself, with that image of him which I had created for myself, and which gave rise in me to the tormenting dream of actually seeing him. The dream was constant, persistent, and painful, yet how fulfil it? Go to

Yasnaya Polyana? To ask Tolstoy to let me look at him at least just that once? But on what ground, with what eyes could I present myself there, an unknown, timid boy? One day I was not able to contain myself any longer: on a beautiful, truly a perfect summer day I suddenly saddled my "Kirghiz," and went galloping off across grain fields and over country roads to the town of Efremov in the direction of Yasnaya Polyana, which lay about one hundred miles from our place. Arrived in Efremov I lost courage and decided to lodge there and think the matter over more carefully. All night I was kept awake by my excitement and by constant indecision as to whether I should go on. I wandered through the town till I was so tired that when I found myself at sunrise in the municipal park I fell fast asleep on the first bench. On waking I was more sober; and after pondering a while I went sadly to the inn for my Kirghiz and started home again at a slow trot.

On the estate the moujiks bantered me:

"Eh, young master, young master, how did you manage to belabour Kirghiz so badly in twenty-four hours? Whom were you chasing? What did you fall in love with? After all, ten to one you didn't gain a thing."

No, I had not gained anything; for several years I vainly awaited my meeting with Tolstoy.

Somewhat later, lured by youthful dreams of a pure, healthy, and good life amid natural surroundings, a life of personal toil, in light and simple clothes, in brotherly friendship not only with all the poor and the oppressed, but also with the whole vegetable and animal kingdoms, yet again chiefly because of my infatuation with Tolstoy as an artist—I became a Tolstoyan. To be sure I was not innocent of a secret selfish hope that my conversion might at least give me some good reason for seeing him and perhaps even for becoming one of the group near him. Thus began my trial, my test, my Tolstoyan novitiate.

I was living in Poltava, where there were as it happened a number of Tolstoyans and I soon became intimately acquainted with them. On the whole, they were a repellent lot; but I tried to endure. The first man I learned to know was a certain Klopsky, a person quite notorious in some circles, the hero of Karonin's novel,



The Teacher of Life, which was creating a furore at the time. He was a tall, thin man in high boots and a blouse, with a narrow drab face and dark blue eyes. A sly and impertinent rascal, an indefatigable chatterer, he was perpetually advising, haranguing, and overwhelming people with his unexpected sallies, his impudent retorts, and the general manner of conduct and conversation which he had developed in the course of his rather carefree and jolly wanderings from town to town. One of the Poltava Tolstoyans was Dr Alexander Alexandrovitch Volkenstein, by birth and nature an aristocrat (a typically Tolstoyan character with no small resemblance to Stiva Oblonsky<sup>1</sup>). On his arrival at Poltava, Klopsky called first of all on Volkenstein, and through him gained access to the local salons. Volkenstein introduced him there both for pious reasons, as a preacher, and also in the interests of sport, as a curiosity. Klopsky would deliver himself, for example, of such orations as this:

"Yes, yes, I see how you are living here: you lie, glut, and do reverence to your ikons in churches which should before now have been blown to bits by dynamite! Who can put an end to all the nonsense and abominations in which the world is submerged? Take the following case. When I was on my way here from Harkov, in the train, a man comes up to me who is for some reason called a 'conductor,' and says to me: 'Your ticket!' I ask: 'What do you mean? What kind of a ticket?' To which he answers: 'Why, the ticket on which you are travelling.' Then I say, quite reasonably, to my mind: 'I beg your pardon, I am travelling on the railroad, not on a ticket.' 'Do you mean, then,' he says, 'that you have no ticket?' 'Of course not.' 'In that case I'll have to put you off at the next station!' 'Very well,' I say, 'that's your business, but my business is to travel.' True enough, at the next station they come and tell me to get off. 'But why,' say I, 'should I get off, when I feel comfortable here?' 'You don't wish to get off then?' 'Certainly not.' 'In that case we'll have to put you off.' 'You will? I am not going.' 'In that case we'll have to drag you or carry you.' 'Well, carry me then, that's your business.' And what do you think? They really did drag me and carry me in their arms,

<sup>1</sup> Translator's note: The lazy, morally loose, and withal charming aristocrat in Anna Karenina.

a fine sight for the respectable public, two stalwart fellows, two peasants who might have better employed themselves tilling the soil."

Such was the notorious Klopsky. The others were not so famous, but also great folks. There were the brothers D., unusually dull, stupid, and conceited, though outwardly very humble, who had settled on the land near Poltava. There was a certain Leontyev, a small skinny young man of a rare, morbid beauty, a former imperial page, who also tormented himself with peasant toil and deceived himself and others by asserting that this toil made him happy. Then there was an enormous Jew, in appearance a genuine Russian moujik, who later became known under the name of Teneromo.<sup>1</sup> He treated plain mortals with extraordinary condescension and self-importance, and was an intolerable rhetorician and a sophist. By trade he was a cooper. It was under his tutelage that I came there. He was my chief instructor both in the "doctrine" and in the method of living by the labour of one's hands; as his apprentice I learned to hammer hoops on barrels. Why did those barrels concern me? Again, purely because they somehow linked me with Tolstoy, gave me a secret hope that eventually I might see him, become known to him, come close to him. Indeed, to my great happiness, this hope was soon quite unexpectedly realized. When the whole brotherhood began to regard me as one of them, Volkenstein invited me (this was at the very end of 1893) to join him on a trip, first to visit the "brothers" in the province of Harkov, the peasants of the Hilkovo village, and then to Moscow, to Tolstoy.

It was a hard journey! We travelled third class, with much changing of trains, always trying to get into the most "common" carriages. We ate only "non-killed" food, that is, sheer rubbish. At times Volkenstein lost patience, and when the train stopped he would suddenly run to the buffet and with terrific greed drain two or three glasses of vodka in succession, stuff his mouth with scalding meat-pies, and address me thus, with extreme gravity:

<sup>1</sup> Translator's note: Feinerman, who lived for a considerable time in Yasnaya Polyana, and published pamphlets and articles on Tolstoy, among them alleged thoughts and sayings of Tolstoy's.

"I have given vent to my lust again, and am suffering deeply as a result. Nevertheless I am still battling with myself, and still know that the pies do not master me, but that I master them. I am not their slave; I eat them when I want them and I don't eat them when I don't want them."

The hardest part of the journey for me was my eagerness to get to Moscow with the greatest possible speed; yet we chose the worst, most "democratic" trains, and we had besides to spend some time with the Hilko "brothers," to commune with them in person, and thereby to "fortify" ourselves. We stayed with them three or four days and during that time I acquired a most cordial hatred for those well-to-do peasants of pious, saintly mien, for our sleeping accommodation in their huts, for their potato-pies, their psalm-singing, their accounts of fierce unending battles with "priests and chiefs," and their hair-splitting pedantic discussions of the Scriptures. At last, on January first we resumed our journey. I remember waking that morning with such joy in my heart that I forgot myself completely and burst out: "Happy New Year, Alexander Alexandrovitch!" Whereupon Alexander Alexandrovitch Volkenstein gave me a most severe scolding: New Year, what was that? Did I realize what superannuated nonsense I was repeating? But I did not care. I listened to his reprimands, and thought: "Very well, very well, this may all be sheer nonsense, but to-morrow evening we are going to be in Moscow, and the day after to-morrow I shall see Tolstoy . . ." So, indeed, it happened.

Volkenstein offended me mortally: he went to Tolstoy the minute we had arrived at our inn and refused to take me along. "Impossible," he said, "impossible. Lev Nikolayevitch must be warned first. I shall prepare him." He hurried off, and returned that night very late. He gave no account of his visit, only remarking hurriedly: "I feel as though I had drunk my fill of living water." By the odour which emanated from him I could be pretty certain that on the top of the living water he had drunk some Chambertin, probably in order to prove that Chambertin could not master him and he could master Chambertin. He did one good thing, however, in that he actually prepared Tolstoy for my visit. I had had little hope that he would do even so much: he was quite charming, but terribly flighty, that dark, handsome, slightly femi-

nine man, who was beginning to grow stout. But he did warn Tolstoy, so at last—the next evening—I ran panting to the Hamovniki manor.

How can I describe all that took place when I got there?

It was a frosty moonlit evening. I ran up to the place, and stopped to catch my breath. Everything was muffled and silent in the empty little street. Before me was a gate, an open wicket, a snow-covered court. Far back to the left I saw an old wooden house, with a reddish light in some of the windows. Farther to the left, beyond the house, stretched a large orchard, and above it quietly shimmered in fairylike beauty the vari-coloured beams of the winter stars. Indeed, everything was like a fairy-tale. What a peculiar orchard, what an unusual house, how meaningful and mysterious those lighted windows, behind which He was—He! And what a stillness! I could hear my heart thumping—from happiness, of course, and also from the awful suspicion had I not better just peep at the house and run back? Rushing desperately into the court and across the porch, I rang the bell. The door was opened at once, and I saw a footman in a frock-coat, a brilliant hall, warm and cozy and a multitude of fur-coats on the racks, among which one sheepskin in particular caught my eye. Directly in front of me rose a steep staircase covered with a red carpet. To the right, under the stairs, I saw a closed door, behind which could be heard guitars and cheerful young voices, amazingly indifferent to the fact that they were being heard in this extraordinary house.

"What name shall I give?"

"Bunin."

"I beg pardon, sir?"

"Bunin."

"Yes, sir."

The footman went up the stairs, and immediately to my great surprise came running back, skipping steps and catching hold of the balustrade:

"Please to wait up in the parlour, sir."

Up in the parlour I was even more surprised: I had scarcely entered, when a little door opened at the rear, to the left, and through it dove with awkward agility—across two or three steps leading from the corridor—a large, grey-bearded, slightly bandy-legged old man

in a spacious home-made blouse of grey flannel, in trousers of the same material that looked more like pantaloons, and in broad-toed shoes. Swift, light, terrible, with piercing eyes and overhanging eyebrows. He came straight to me (still I managed to observe in his gait and in his whole build a strong resemblance to my father). Swiftly, and bowing slightly, he approached me, and stretching or rather flinging out a large hand, palm upward, he seized my whole hand within it, pressed it softly, and unexpectedly smiled a most enchanting smile, kindly and at the same time sorrowful, even somewhat compassionate. I then saw that those small eyes were not at all terrible or piercing, but merely keen like an animal's, though in them too there was something sorrowful and compassionate. The light, sparse remnants of his grey hair, slightly curling at the ends, were parted in the middle, peasant fashion; his ears were set unusually high, the protruding arches of his brows overhung the eyes, his beard was dry, light, and uneven, and so transparent that one could see through it to his somewhat protruding lower jaw.

"Bunin? Was it not your father whom I met in the Crimea? Then you are related to the Grotes? Well, have you come to Moscow for a long stay? For what purpose? To see me? A young writer? Go on, write, if you feel a great desire to do so, only remember that under no circumstances can that be the aim of life. . . . Please, sit down and tell me about yourself."

He began to talk as briskly as he had entered, pretending with his customary good breeding, not to notice my utter embarrassment, and hastening to get me out of it, to distract me. What else did he say? He chiefly asked questions—he was fond of doing that, as I subsequently learned.

"A bachelor? Married? With a woman one must live only as with wife, and one must never leave her. Do you wish to live a simple life of toil? That's good, only do not force yourself, do not make a strait jacket out of that life. One can be a good man in any life."

We sat by a small table. A rather tall faience lamp burned softly under a rose-coloured shade. His face was hidden by the lamp, in a faint shadow. I could see only the soft grey stuff of his blouse, and his large hand, to which I felt like pressing my lips in ecstatic, genuinely filial tenderness. I listened to his aged,

slightly high-pitched voice with the timbre characteristic of a protruding jaw. Suddenly I heard the rustle of silk. I looked up, started, arose: In a magnificent black dress, a tall woman with an exquisite *coiffure* and vivacious, wholly dark eyes, was gracefully advancing towards us from the drawing-room.

"*Léon*," she said gently yet firmly, "you have forgotten that they are waiting for you."

He also got up, and raising his eyebrows with an apologetic, almost guilty smile, looked straight into my face with his small eyes in which I could still see a certain dark animal sadness, and once more seized my hand in his:

"Well, good-bye, good-bye, God bless you, come to see me when you are in Moscow again. Do not expect much of life; you will never have a better time than now. There is no happiness in life, there are only its heat lightnings—cherish them, live by them."

I went out, ran out, completely distraught. I spent a crazy night, seeing him over and over in my dreams, with such striking distinctness and in such wild confusion that to this day I recall it with dread. I would awake and catch myself muttering things in delirium.

After my return to Poltava I wrote to him and received several kindly letters in reply. In one of them he again suggested that I need not try so hard to be a Tolstoyan, but there was no holding me back: true, I stopped hammering hoops, but I began to peddle the Mediator<sup>1</sup> booklets. Without any legal permit, I tried to sell them in market-places and at country fairs, for which I was tried and sentenced to jail. To my profound chagrin I was pardoned by virtue of an imperial edict. Later I opened a bookshop, the Poltava branch of the Mediator, and muddled up the accounts to such an extent that at times I was on the point of hanging myself. In the end of course I had to abandon the shop. I went to Moscow, but even there I tried for quite some time to persuade myself that I was brother and comrade to the leaders of the Mediator and to those who constantly lounged in the bookstore instructing one another on the subject of the good life. It was there that I

<sup>1</sup> Translator's note: Tolstoy sponsored a philanthropic publishing house, the Mediator, which issued and sold cheap editions of Tolstoy's favourite authors.



saw Tolstoy a few more times. Of an evening he would walk in, or rather run in (he walked at a light and terrific pace) and without taking off his sheepskin coat would stay half an hour or an hour, surrounded by the brotherhood, who asked him occasionally such questions as: "Lev Nikolayevitch, what am I to do, if say a tiger attacks me?" In such cases he would smile in embarrassment and say:

"Tiger? What tiger? Where would a tiger come from? I for one haven't met a tiger in all my life."

I was at his home only once more. They took me through the parlor, where on the previous occasion I had sat with him by the genial rose-coloured lamp, then through that little door, up the little steps behind it, and along the narrow corridor. I knocked timidly at the door to the right.

"Come in," responded an old, high-pitched voice.

Entering, I saw a low small room submerged in twilight by reason of the metal shade over an antique candlestick with two candles; next I descried a leather couch by the table on which the candlestick stood, and finally Tolstoy himself, with a book in his hand. At my entrance he rose instantly. And awkwardly, or even in embarrassment as it seemed to me, he threw the book into a corner of the couch. My eyes were keen however and I noticed that he had been reading, that is, rereading (probably for the tenth time as all of us sinners do) his own story, *Master and Workman* which had just been published. In my enthusiasm for it I was tactless enough to utter an admiring exclamation. He blushed to the roots of his hair and waved his hands:

"Ah, don't say that! Ah, what are you saying, what are you saying! It is terrible stuff, so rotten that I'm ashamed to walk through the streets!"

His face that evening was extraordinary: thin, dark, severe, as if made of cast bronze. He was suffering greatly just then—recently his last child had died—seven-year-old Vanya. After we talked of *Master and Workman* he mentioned the boy with great animation.

"Yes, yes, he was a fine, a charming boy. Just what does it mean: he is dead? There is no death, he is not dead, as long as we love him, live by him!"

Soon we went out and walked to the Mediator. It was a black March night; a spring wind was fanning the flames of the street lamps. We were hurrying across the snow-covered Maiden Field. He leaped over ditches, I could hardly keep up with him. Again he spoke, abruptly, sternly, sharply.

"There is no death. There is no death!"

There is no death. . . . Still, alas, in those terrible days when he lay dying at Astapovo, I wept desperately as I had wept only two or three times before in my life. I kept recalling my last glimpse of him. I had been walking in the Arbat part of Moscow on a fearfully sharp penetrating evening, the lights burning bright behind glittering shop-windows, white with frost. Suddenly I collided with him as he came running straight at me, with his elastic, bouncing stride. I stopped and pulled off my cap. He also stopped, and recognized me at once:

"Ah, it's you! Good evening, good evening! Please, put on, put on your cap. . . . Well, how and where are you, and how are things going with you?"

His aged face was so numb and dark with cold, it was distressing. On his head he wore a knit something of light-blue wool which resembled an old woman's cap. His large hand which he had brought out of a woolen glove was sheer ice. At the end of the conversation he repeatedly pressed my hand with his icy one, firmly and tenderly, looking sorrowfully into my eyes once again and, with raised eyebrows:

"Well, Christ be with you, Christ be with you. Good-bye. . . ."

## WHEREFORE

BY SCOFIELD THAYER

Because my passion was deep and sad,  
Because no peace of the world I had,

Because the waves were clean and sound,  
Because it was good to hear them pound

And be clean inside for a clean small space  
And to spill on my heart the sun's last grace

As he closed his sermon behind the wood  
Where I knew from his bell the stag yet stood

Speaking the heart of that autumn day  
Which under horse-chestnuts gleaming lay,

Sound and ripe, and round and true,  
Like the hearts of the men in the ships I knew

Hull-down, agleam, and close to me—  
For my heart walks quickly walking at sea

And though I stand on a desert beach  
My heart keeps a long and a certain reach

Whereby all men whose hearts are good,  
Whose hearts are stiff like their own oars' wood,

Are held against me mightily  
As I watch drear boats put out to sea

And know the sacred thole-pin's creak  
And hear stern heels on the braces squeak

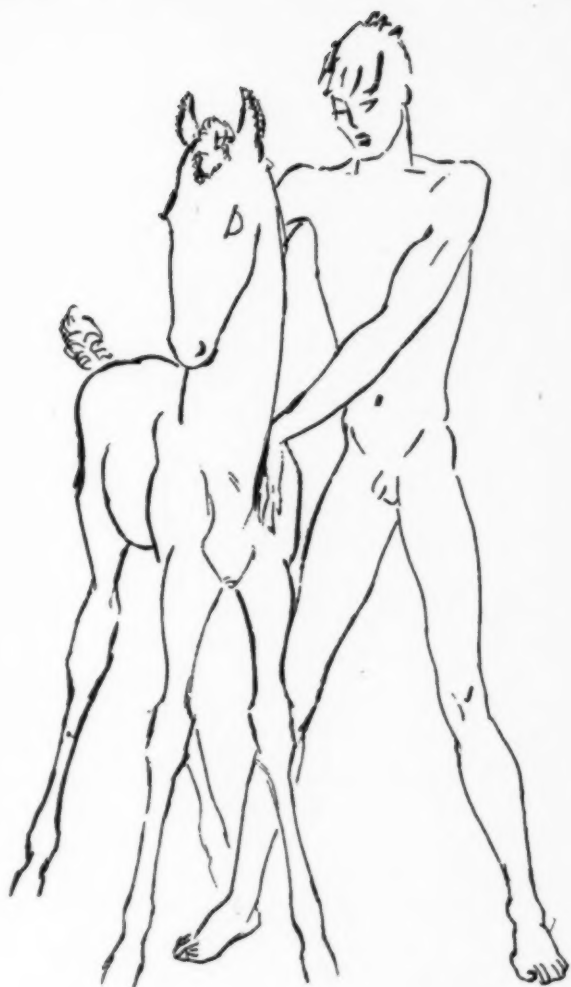
## WHEREFORE

And catch on wet blades the last knife-glint  
Of the logic of sunlight straight as print

On the straight fired page of a word from God,  
Superb and silent and sane and odd,—

Like a fisher-man rowing out toward night  
On the last waste gleam of the last waste light  
Picking up as he goes the harsh bird's flight  
And smiting stern waves with a sane, odd Might;—

Therefore I stood looking out to sea  
Till the Great Stars came and stood with me.



*Courtesy of the Flecktheim Gallery, Berlin*  
**BOY WITH HORSE. BY RENEE SENTENIS**

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## LAND

BY KONRAD BERCOVICI

**M**ERIAN is a one-street-perched-on-a-hill village in Normandy. The conic tower of the church sits on a squat, square, grey stone building on the top of the hill and dominates the field-stone houses that wind in and out on both sides of the road, leaning one against the other. The shoemaker's shop juts out from the front of his house in the middle of the village; the thatched-roof inn, the roped-off dancing ground, and the blacksmith's shop hug the sharp curve at the bottom of the village.

Back of the houses stretch the fields, criss-crossed by numerous hedges and patches; a crazy quilt of green and golden-brown velvet that fades into shades of blue and red when harvest days arrive.

Each villager owns a dozen small patches of land, this side and the other side of the road. One piece at the top, back of the church, another piece in the line back of the smithy adjoining that of another villager, and other narrow long strips all over the apron of the mountain.

It had been so for centuries. No one had ever thought of trading parcels of land so as to have the farm in one piece. The slow-thinking Normandian French peasants repeated the life of their ancestors, but did not continue it. They lived as they worked, always ploughing the same furrows.

And then suddenly, Jean Fanchon began exchanging with his neighbours pieces of land he owned in fields far away from his home, to round his farm up into one piece of property. In fifteen years of trading and bickering he had all but succeeded, save for one narrow strip of ground which divided his property in two, and which belonged to his next-door neighbour, Père Dupont. And whenever Fanchon proposed to buy that strip, narrow-chested, long-faced Dupont made counter proposals for some of Fanchon's land on the side adjoining his property.

Whenever the cession of this strip of ground was mentioned, the older men in the village looked on, silently but disturbed at the things Jean Fanchon had started. For now many of the

younger peasants began to do likewise, exchanging and straightening out their properties. The square-headed notary and the bespectacled land surveyor were always in their midst, gathering in the ready cash and piling up reams of documents and blue surveyor's maps in the mayor's office.

Jean Fanchon was a childless widower at the age of sixty. He had buried his second wife after the harvest. His big, neckless head perched almost directly on his tremendous broad shoulders; like a cannon ball on a stone fence. His short bow-legs, a little bent at the knee, made his movements like those of a mountain set in motion. His small blue eyes under the protruding bushy brow, and his large firm mouth and pressed, clean-shaven lips completed the total impression of a figure hewn out of a mountain stone block. It was said of him that he had killed his two wives by hard work, and that an ox or a horse lived only half its life in Fanchon's stable. Every animal was put under the yoke, the cow, the ox, the horse, his wife, himself; and even the big shepherd dog was harnessed to a cart every time Jean Fanchon went to town to sell some surplus vegetables in the market of the village below Merian.

He lived for only one thing, Fanchon; his land, the enlarging and rounding up of his land holdings; and waited and hoped to acquire more land to the right and to the left, to the bottom and to the top of his farm; creeping in all directions like a worm.

But in doing so, he had stirred the antagonism and ambition of Père Dupont, who often outbid him when a woman at the death of her husband found it necessary to sell a piece of land to pay the burial expenses, or when a peasant had to part with some of his property to pay an accumulated doctor bill or to buy a horse to replace the one that died during the harvest in the middle of the field; for they were all hard workers, the people of Merian. Such reckless hard work was frequently the cause of their poverty. They killed their beasts and died themselves in the field in harness.

At the inn on Sundays, where they all assembled after the church services, the peasants said that if Fanchon and Dupont were to live long enough they would in time own all the land of Merian and leave the others nothing but the humid walls on which to grow mushrooms.

Three or four times every year for ten years Père Dupont had

made offers for Fanchon's land, the other side of the narrow strip he owned, to be met by counter proposals for his.

But after the death of Jean Fanchon's wife, Père Dupont and his neighbour came to the inn together and drank wine from the same bottle, each one protesting at the end of the two-hour session that it was his turn to pay. On Christmas eve Père Dupont invited Fanchon to dine with his family. The village looked on and wondered what was at the bottom of that friendship. They were men of about the same age, the two neighbours. And seeing them walk together leaning heavily on their knotted canes from the church to the inn and back to Père Dupont's home, through the streets, caused many a man's uneasiness. If those two should ever put their heads together . . . But most of the peasants concluded Fanchon and Dupont had designs upon each other's land and planned to outwit each other, and that their friendship was nothing but a sham and ruse, and that the two sly wolves were just as ready as before to tear each other's throats.

Père Dupont had two daughters and a son. Marietta, the eldest of the children, had at twenty-two begun to lose the roundness and softness of youth and was becoming as hard as her mother, whose brown weather-beaten skin looked like parchment drawn over angular bones. Louise, blonde, plump, blue-eyed, was two years younger than Marietta. She still danced every Sunday at the square back of the inn and seemed to have taken over, together with the discarded dresses of her older sister, also the hopes she had once had of escaping the parental yoke.

The Dupont family, however, centered their hopes on George, the eight-year-old late-born son of an old father and a tired mother, the future owner of the Dupont land and fortune. Nothing was too good for little George, nothing too expensive for him. And had Père Dupont followed his own whim, Monsieur Fernand, the doctor of the adjoining town, would have lived permanently in his house, to take care of the boy.

Whenever the slightest thing happened to the boy, he accused his daughters or his wife, and, beating his narrow chest, he would cry in a strident voice: "For whom do I work, for whom do I kill myself, if it isn't for this boy?"

There was no will but the farmer's will in that house. His

wife and his daughters were like the cattle in the stables and the land back of the house, of which he was free to dispose as he pleased.

And so one day, Père Dupont, on returning from a very long walk with Père Fanchon, announced to Marietta that she was to be married to Jean Fanchon, immediately after the harvest.

It was his first triumph over his neighbour. For weeks and weeks they had disputed, without the family knowing about their plans, whether the marriage should take place immediately that spring, or whether the marriage should take place after the harvest. Each one wanted the use of the woman during the period of heavy work. The dispute narrowed down to weeks, to days. But finally it was agreed for immediately after the harvest, before the threshing.

"He thinks he is clever. He, he, Jean Fanchon, you wait," Dupont gloated, rubbing his hands.

The mother looked appealingly at her husband. She did not utter a single word, that glance was the only protest she had ever made. Not because Marietta had not been consulted or because of Fanchon's age, but because he was known to be a hard task-master. Fanchon had killed his two wives by hard work. Marietta looked meekly at the two, and reflected aloud: "After the harvest"; as if it did not concern her at all, as if her will and person had nothing to do with what had been decided by her father and the other man.

"After the harvest," the father repeated. "We have been disputing that point for the last two months, and it is as I wanted. You will help harvest our field, not his," he added triumphantly, underscoring the victory over his neighbour.

In the village outside doors, over fences, at the inn, and at the dancing places, as well as at the church, people talked about this new move of Père Dupont's, and wondered that so shrewd a man as Jean Fanchon should not have detected the ruse. It was evident that Dupont was marrying his daughter to the old farmer in order to grab the land for his son. Ere long, in five, in ten years, the childless widow would inherit everything that belonged to Fanchon. Fanchon's father had died at sixty-five, his grandfather at seventy. Sixty-five, seventy, was all the life strength of a Fanchon; the peasants knew. Then it would go to little George.

No one dared to talk openly to Jean Fanchon and attract his attention to what was going to happen to his land, but people talked loud enough within his hearing. They began to look at Marietta, wondering what in her could have so attracted the old man as to make him do such an unreasonable thing. Or was it the spring? There was no fool like an old fool. Spring had seduced him.

Yet some of the older men were not certain Dupont had triumphed. They knew how Fanchon could work people, people as well as cattle, and wondered whether Dupont's daughter was strong enough to resist the task he would impose upon her. It was a contest between youth and old age, with Marietta as the pawn. She would add Fanchon's land to that of Dupont or she would die.

Docilely, without opposing and without accepting, the young girl bowed to her father's will, as everybody in her home had always done, as she had seen the oxen lower their heads when he presented the yoke to them. The short dreams of early youth were faded and dead. Marriage was another yoke, nothing else.

In that French peasant village, outwardly so picturesque and gay, no one laughed much. Those who once laughed had died somewhere far away, in the dirt and the mud; and those who still lived would never return.

The day after the harvest Jean Fanchon claimed his bride. The wedding ceremony at the little church and the cost of it seemed to him an imposition of the outside world. Why have such costly ceremonies at such a transaction? It was a waste of time and money.

Marietta, in her best dress and white veil over her brow, stumbled through the formalities in a dazed, unconscious manner. She did not realize what her marriage and what her life would be with that old man she had heard vilified ever since she was a child. She had seen him pass up and down in front of her house too frequently to be afraid of him.

She was only half aware of what had happened when the guests had gone and she had remained alone in the strange house with the old man. Yet, it was so much like her father's house, she set about cleaning the dishes from the table and putting the things away. Jean Fanchon looked at her from behind the curtain of

smoke he blew from his pipe. He watched her walk stolidly with measured gait from one place to another, and wondered who would win, he or Père Dupont. When the table was cleared and the room was put in order, he pointed to the room curtained off from the kitchen-dining-room and said:

"Go to bed. There is much work to be done to-morrow. I am threshing."

It took Marietta a few days to get the lay of the house and the field. Fanchon let her go about and do very much as she pleased, but forbid her to go without his knowledge to the home of her parents. "You are mine, now. And don't you ever take anything from here there . . . or, *Dieu*, if you do!"

He watched her closely, afraid that she might rob him and give his goods to the other man, his enemy. But, once convinced of her honesty, as one becomes convinced of the honesty of a servant, he never spoke of it again.

There was much work to be done. Marietta was continually at her husband's side, doing more than her share, digging deeper furrows for the fall ploughing and coming out at the end of the field before him. Standing side by side, they threshed together and husked corn together, and at the end of the day, when Père Fanchon's back was curved a little more than in the morning, she would still have to work to prepare the food for the two, feed the cattle, milk the cows, and feed the chickens.

Jean Fanchon never grumbled or nagged. He watched her from the corner of his eye and let her work. It was more than her father had done. Dupont never ceased talking, censuring; he was never satisfied, he grumbled always. Fanchon kept quiet, but speeded those who worked with him by working hard himself.

Marietta began to realize her position as a wife. What she did was for herself. It all belonged to her as well as to her husband. Those wide stretches of land on both sides of the road, those large corn-cribs full of heavy, hard, golden grain; the oxen and the yokes, the ploughs, the horses, the fowl—all belonged to her as well. What had Dupont to do with all this? She began to do the work with joy and love. It was all her own. She touched the things and caressed them. Her own. Her own.



Though she knew why her father had married her to the old man, she became part of her new surroundings, as she became possessed by the things about her. A vague tenderness for field and cattle and her man crept into her. It was an emotion she had never been aware of in herself or in others. She began to love the things and the cattle and the fowl about her.

At first, Fanchon was suspicious. He, too, had been working continually from early morning until late at night, driving all about him to the utmost, but there had not been any love for work in him. He did it because of what he expected from the work and not because he loved it. Why should any one love work? He could understand killing a man to possess a strip of land. But one owned land without loving it. When he saw Marietta pat the ox, he could not believe she did it because of tenderness, or love for the animal; she did it because she expected it soon to be hers, her father's. She coveted it as he did other people's land. When she dug a deeper furrow than he did, he mistrusted her. And even the tenderness with which she looked at him when she enquired whether he was not too tired at the end of the day's work, the care with which she prepared his food, the attention she gave to his socks, did not convince him of anything else but her perfidy. Oh, that woman was working for her own father. He knew why Père Dupont had given him his daughter in marriage. But Dupont would soon find out who Jean Fanchon was. That weasel-eyed neighbour of his had drilled his daughter well. But Jean Fanchon was neither blind nor dumb. True, that she set the pace of work now and not he, but Père Dupont would learn how strong Jean Fanchon really was.

Thus passed the fall and the winter. When spring came, Marietta's fowl yard had more clucking hens than any farmyard in the neighbourhood. Watching her be so tender and so loving, Fanchon, fighting with himself not to let his suspicions subside, closed up more and more within himself. She was disarming him with her sincerity and her faithfulness. He protested at the sight of so many baskets of setting hens in the house and against her devotion to the little calf she kept near the kitchen stove to protect it from the cold wind that blew in through the cracks in the barn

early in the spring. She answered his protests with a smile and cooed to the fluffy, unsteady white calf.

Tenderness, which he had never known in any human being and which had never come to the surface in him, began to win him more and more every day, and he began to return some of it. Instead of looking at the woman working beside him in the fields as at a beast of burden from whom to extract every ounce of strength by giving as much of his own strength, Jean Fanchon surprised himself thinking that Marietta was working too hard. He began to take into consideration that she had to prepare the food in the evening and do chores, and he would insist that she should go home earlier from the field.

Home was a pleasant place to return to evenings. It was so different from what it had been. She had changed its sourness and bitter sobriety. She had put bits of ribbon and coloured paper in curtains and over the fireplace. She had painted the old oak beams of the kitchen green. He looked on pleasantly when Marietta played with the dog and laughed at his pranks. That dog, who had never known anything but work and the whip of a harsh master, began to liven up and dare be playful even with him. And when Jean Fanchon had once laughed goodheartedly, joyfully, he was ill in bed for three days. He looked at Marietta. What lovely colour had come into her cheeks that spring! Her eyes, which had been an extinguished blue, had the hue of the mountain sky now. Her hair, once flat, lustreless, and cold, had taken on warmth and a fluffiness which made her look much younger than she was. Ah, no matter what people said, he was not so bad a master. He looked at himself. He was growing younger every day.

Her love embraced not only him but everything about him; the walls, the chairs, the tables, the stove, the barnyard, and even the field in which he worked, and upon which he had always looked as only a hard taskmaster.

Work was a pleasure now. How he would have scoffed had anybody ever made such a fuss as Marietta made about the poppies in the wheat and the bluebells in the hedges. How he would have railed against any wife pleating daisies in her hair. But when she had tied a bunch of field flowers to the handle of his plough and

put a buttercup in his battered hat while they were ploughing side by side, it brought tears to his eyes. No, that woman was like no other woman.

The people of the village watched and waited. There seemed to be no contest on between the two, no contest as to who was going to kill the other one at work. They were being seen leaving the field hand in hand. They were seen sitting on the porch together, talking softly, not as enemies but as the best of friends. Jean Fanchon, who used to drive the passing tradesmen from his door, now called them in and bought things for his wife as well as for himself, and treated the tradesmen to wine after paying them. He parted lightheartedly with money when he bought things for her. No, there was no fool like an old fool!

When Marietta's father heard his daughter singing one morning on the way to the fields with her husband, he let the pitchfork fall out of his hand. Rushing back into the house he muttered to his wife, "That daughter of yours has betrayed me."

Mother Dupont tried to defend her offspring. Perhaps Marietta had only entered too well into the game. Perhaps there was another contest going on underneath the one in the field, a contest in which youth was bound to win.

Dupont shrugged his hunched shoulders.

"Perhaps, perhaps."

He was not convinced.

While wheat was growing and work had slackened, Jean Fanchon took Marietta down one Sunday to dance back of the inn. She was so gay and so sprightly and was dressed so becomingly, the young men of the village asked her to dance over and over again. Jean Fanchon was looking on, happy his wife was amusing herself.

Père Dupont's face hardened and his fingers cramped themselves. It was not at all the Marietta he had known. And she never came to see him. All his plans were in jeopardy. Even if Fanchon should suddenly pass away, the Marietta he saw now would easily find another husband. Not only because she would be a wealthy woman, but because of her own looks. A young widowed peasant

who had worked for Fanchon, George Istar, never took his eyes from her while she danced. That Istar man would surely marry Marietta if Fanchon were to die now. She would bring him the fortune instead of bringing it to the Dupont house to be inherited by the son of the family and make him the wealthiest peasant not only of Merian, but of the whole countryside. All his plans had been shattered by that daughter of his. Who would ever have believed it? With what assurance she walked and talked and danced now. As if she were the master already of the Fanchon fortune. She had deceived him, betrayed him. He had pinned his hopes on a woman and she was betraying him.

While the dance was going on outside, Jean Fanchon called his father-in-law into the inn for a glass of wine.

"Here, sit down. And, innkeeper, bring some of your best."

The two men sat down, looking at each other quizzically and understandingly. When the innkeeper had brought the wine and set down the glasses, Marietta's husband filled his father-in-law's glass to the brim, and called out:

"Here is to you. It was a wonderful idea to give me your daughter in marriage. You proved to be a real friend. I am thankful to you. She is all you said she was and a lot more. I am happy with her. And I am good to her. She has made my house a place which I go to with pleasure and joy. But, tell me, why is it I had never heard her laugh while she was in your home, eh? Look at her now. Come out and look at her."

And he pulled the old man outside, holding the half-empty glass of red wine in his hand.

"Have you ever seen Marietta like this, dancing and laughing? Look at all the young men about her. Ha, Ha! What a wonderful young widow she will make! But not yet, not for a long while yet. For I, too, am growing younger every day," and Fanchon threw out his chest and straightened himself up.

Before the dance was over, Père Dupont managed to have a few words with Marietta, but she answered his reproaches with a loud laugh. She neither feared him nor took his words into consideration.

"Why don't you ever come to see us?"

"There are too many things to do in my own house to bother

with other people's homes. I see you as it is frequently enough. And when I don't see you I hear you grumbling. I have a barnyard twice the size of yours to take care of, and a husband and a home. And we have fields as large as yours. Why don't you sell us that strip of land? It would make ploughing and harvesting easier."

"You have betrayed me," old Dupont hissed at his daughter. She answered with a louder laugh, and joined her husband who had started on the way home.

That fall a new desire awoke in Jean Fanchon. If only he were to have a son by Marietta, a being of his own blood and flesh to whom everything would eventually belong.

He looked with envy at little children sleeping in home-made cribs while their parents were at work. If he should have one like those! Never would he allow his wife to quit the child. He would work for her, doing her share of the work in the field, and return home before sundown, to look into the child's eyes, to watch it squirm and turn and hear it laugh.

This new desire awakened more tenderness in the old man. When he spoke of his desires to Marietta, the words almost choked him. She threw her arms about him and kissed him. Nothing like that had ever happened to him. It was a rare fruit which he had never tasted before.

The following spring, the whole village knew that Marietta was to become a mother. And if there were ugly rumours about her and George Istar who worked for her husband and who danced with her frequently at the inn, the source of these rumours was to be found within Père Dupont's own walls.

Fanchon forbade Marietta to go to the fields. She did too much work to suit him. When she protested that the work had to be done, the old man cried out:

"Well, we can hire somebody. There are enough women in the village with nothing else to do. There are widows here glad to earn a few pennies. I am not yet poverty-stricken and the harvest looks good."

Marietta's own thrift prevented her from accepting his gener-

osity. It was waste of money to hire somebody to do work she could do. It was something she had never even thought of. It was her money. It was her house. Her home. Her fields. She had worked hard. And she was soon to have a child of her own. One could not spend money recklessly when one expected an heir. She quieted her husband. Why, she was not doing half the work she used to do.

In reality she was doing more, though she did not work in the fields. And she was happy. Somebody loved her. Everybody loved her. Her husband, Istar, the horses, the dogs, the oxen.

The relations between her and her parents were interrupted. No words were necessary. No explanation. The Fanchons were the enemies of the Duponts. Marietta was setting up her own family, and that strip of field which cleaved Fanchon's property in two now separated the two neighbours for ever.

Thus passed the spring and part of the summer. The seed having been good and the rains having come at the proper time, the wheat and the corn grew rapidly. The heavy golden beads at the top were so heavy they bent the wheat blades. Towards the end of August the swishing song in the fields told that the grain was getting ripe. The waving corn was like a huge tapestry that was continually weaving itself, forming patterns that resolved themselves into other patterns and figures. The brown tassels floating in the air were like webs of silk upon a dark green-blue background.

From the window of her home, Marietta looked upon the fields and watched the men at work alongside the yellow long-horned plodding oxen. The outdoors attracted her with an irresistible power. On the other side was the field of her father, equally as fruitful as that of her husband, but it did not seem nearly so beautiful. This one, her own, was more beautiful. She thought of her father's dogs, of her father's horses and cows and oxen in which she had never found any beauty. How beautiful her own were! She bestowed love upon them and they returned it. Her father was in his fields. Jean Fanchon was in his. She looked at them. They were both talking loudly to their oxen. Her father's voice was harsh and he was cursing the beasts to make them pull in a straight line. Jean Fanchon was talking in a



friendly tone to his. What now separated the two properties more than ever was the harshness on the one and the love and tenderness on the other. Even the blades of wheat and the corn stalks knew and felt it. And the wind sang gaily in her fields, like a lover responding to the call of his mate. She had done all this. It was her work.

When harvest time approached, Marietta could not resist the temptation to go out into the fields. Her husband objected again and again, but she assured him nothing would happen, that she felt as well and as strong as she had ever felt. She would not work as much as he or Istar, but he must allow her to do a certain amount of work. Why, she argued, time was hanging on her idle hands. She could see small clouds gathering on the horizon. The wheat had to be harvested during dry weather. They were already later than other years with the harvest because of the cold spring.

Finally Fanchon had to allow her to come out into the fields with them. He could not resist her, and it was a late year. . . . He let her do as she pleased. But she must not overwork. He would keep an eye on her, and if she would dare to do more than a little work, he would forbid her altogether to come into the fields. She promised.

During the first hours while the tall wheat reaching almost to her chin was falling about her under the large stroke of the scythe, she remained back of the two men, who worked side by side.

But soon the old ardour of work took hold of her. She forgot herself and her condition and was conscious of nothing but that the two men were ahead of her and that clouds were gathering on the horizon. Her stroke became larger, her scythe moved faster. Imperceptibly, she gained upon them. At the noon hour the three pairs of arms swung rhythmically together in one line, moved by an invisible power which drove them on farther and farther.

She felt a clawing pain in her spine that evening and a burning down her throat, which she had never known before. Things danced before her eyes. But she concealed her pains from her husband by unusual gaiety; chatting with him and Istar during the dinner

hour and telling new stories of the pranks of the dog and the newly foaled colt.

She felt a still more intense pain at the end of the following day. In the pressure of work with the weather threatening to change and ruin the harvest, Jean Fanchon forgot to warn his wife. To cut the wheat down before it was too late was uppermost in Fanchon's mind. He was a farmer. His wife was a third pair of arms cutting down wheat under a grey sky.

They worked until sundown. After they had hastily eaten a light dinner, as there was only one more small strip to be cut down, they decided to work in the moonlight, to get the thing finished before it was too late. Below on the other side of the hill people were already threshing. They could hear the rumbling of the steam engines day and night.

Marietta did not feel equal to the task. Her feet were heavy and she could move her arms upwards only with great difficulty. All her body seemed to be pressed down to the ground by a weight that crushed the back of her neck. She could only see the shadows of the men as they walked about. Still she kept her smile so well, she concealed her condition from the two men. There was a strip of wheat to be cut down. They were late. Clouds were gathering on the horizon. Elsewhere people were already threshing.

Fanchon and Istar went out after she had told them that she wanted to remain in the house to take care of things. It was Saturday night. They should be through before midnight. Tomorrow was a long day and they could sleep and rest as long as they pleased.

Furiously the two men worked in the moonlight up to their arm-pits in the swishing, waving light yellow of the wheat blades. Their curved backs swung low to the hissing scythes. The steel shone sharply in the dark and the harsh sound of the edge against the dry straw arose above the thud of the falling straw and the shrill cries of the disturbed crickets and field birds. The moon sailed through the gathering clouds. In the adjoining fields other men were likewise working silently, crawling along like giant ants.

Then suddenly, Fanchon grabbed Istar by the shoulder.

"*Mon Dieu!* Did you hear?"

They remained stock-still and listened.

"It must have been an owl," Istar said, ready to swing again his scythe.

Another cry rent the air. Fanchon dropped the scythe and ran at top speed towards his home. In the doorway he stumbled over the body of Marietta.

Jean Fanchon, his back so bent his hands almost reached the ground followed the white pine coffin carried on the shoulders of four men. It was as if everything he owned had suddenly been taken away from him. He looked on at the open grave for another one in which to lie down himself. He was so tired, so unwilling to live. Life was worth nothing without her. Forlorn, smothered, his body trembled on his weak knees. He listened in a dazed way to the prayers of the old priest, and to the cries and the weeping of the women while the coffin was lowered in the ground.

He raised his eyes to look at the sky. His gaze met that of Père Dupont.

In an instant, all that had happened from the day he had married Marietta to that minute was wiped out. Dupont's eyes recalled other things, another Fanchon. Straightening himself up to his full height, with the air of a warrior, he called at him over the length of the grave:

"And you thought that she would bury me!"

And turning his back he left the graveyard.

## TWO POEMS

BY MacKNIGHT BLACK

### CORLISS ENGINE

The hours, in a long plunge,  
Swirl unconquering  
Against this motion clear in steel.  
Body of an older birth, like rock  
That stands against a sea, this motion breaks  
Time's lesser flow. And here is raised  
A symbol of the flight in emptiness  
That bears the world and our own selves;  
Before such clarity the days fall back; the very days  
That drown our lives at last, fall spent  
Before the deeper might that builds our blood.

### FLY-WHEEL

The steel repeats,  
The steel repeats itself;  
The wheel-arc's flight,  
The curving journey,  
Has my heart's  
Persistency.  
The same, the clear  
Perfection follows close  
Upon perfection:  
Pulse and swirl,  
And stillness broken;  
Waves of steel and thrusts of blood,  
Like generations on the earth,  
Sons and fathers, fathers, sons;  
Peace of motion, like a seed  
That comes to seed again.



*Courtesy of the Galerie Simon, Paris*

LA VALLEE. BY ANDRE DERAÏN

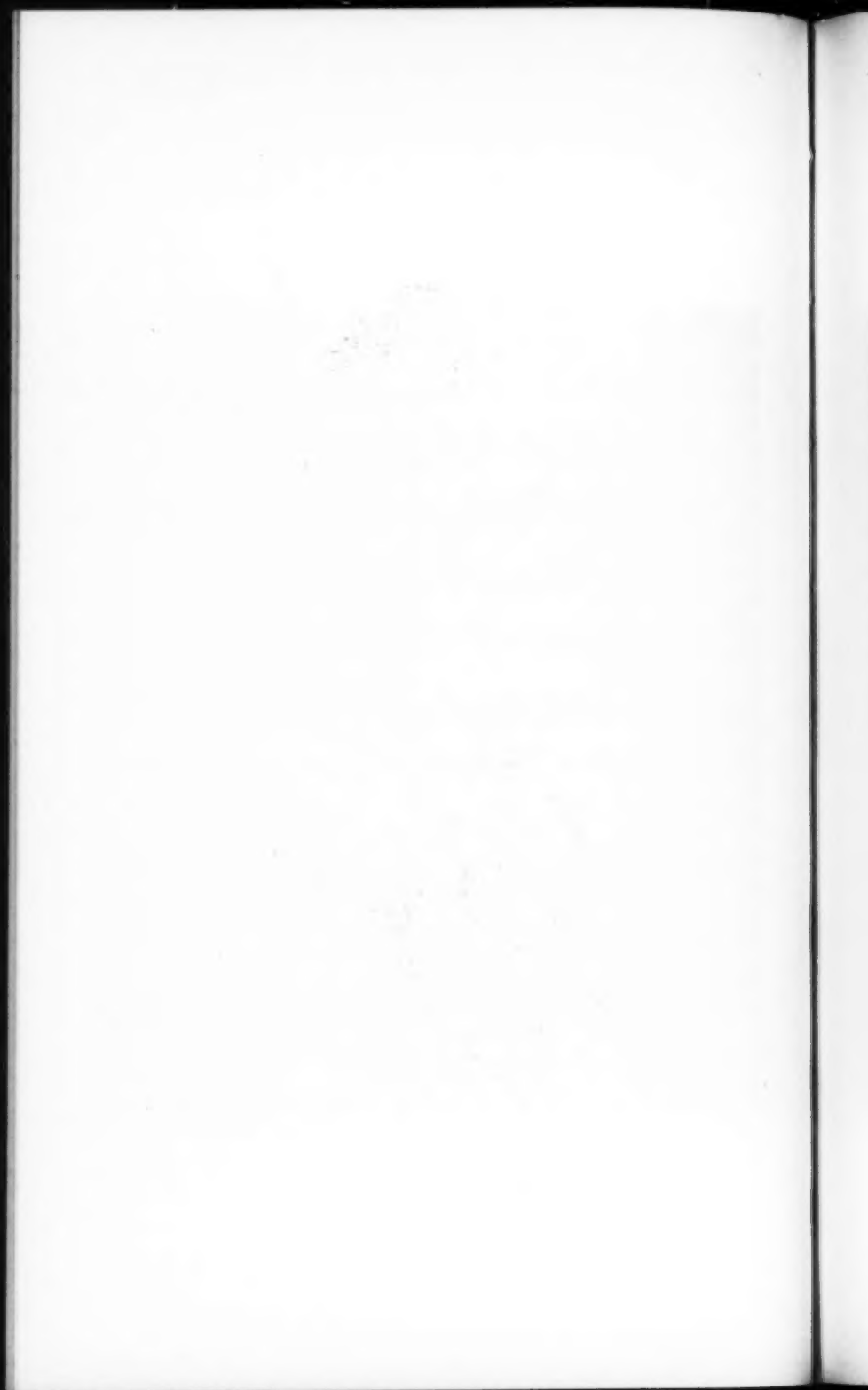


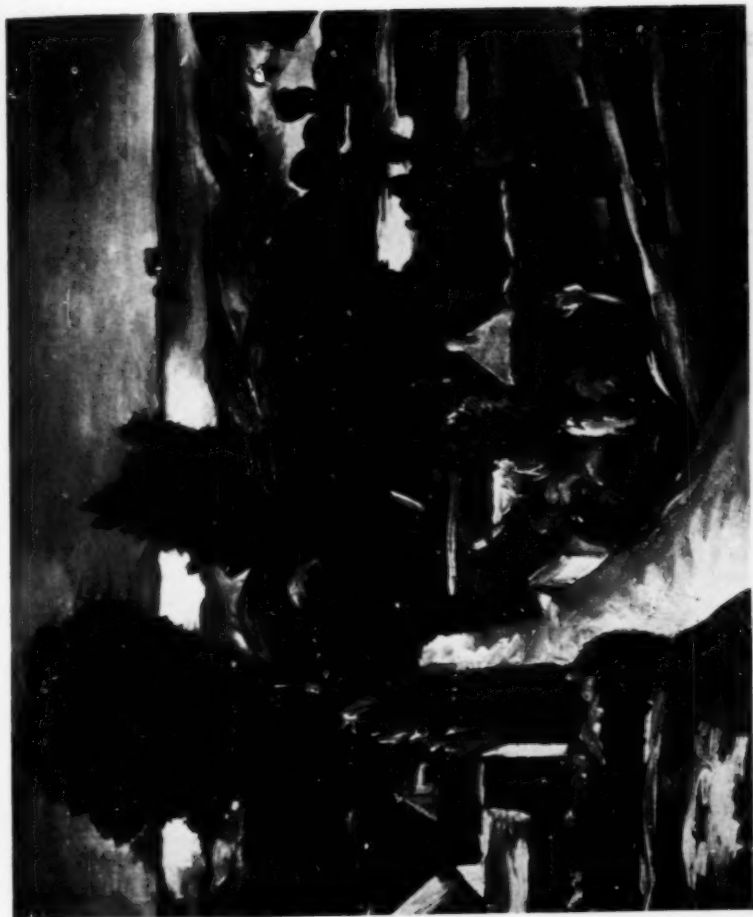


*Courtesy of the Galerie Simon, Paris*

LE PONT. BY ANDRÉ DERRAIN







*Courtesy of the Galerie Simon, Paris*

CAMIERS. BY ANDRÉ DERRAIN

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## THE EDUCATION OF WILLIAM JAMES

BY CHARLES K. TRUEBLOOD

THE letters of William James, which are now issued in a single volume,<sup>1</sup> are in themselves a biography of force and charm; and taken with the two autobiographic works of Henry James—*A Small Boy and Others*, and *Notes of a Son and Brother*—they are a clear exhibition of the fact that a man is made as well as born. The sensitive cosmopolitan intellectuality of William James, the abundant humanity of his genius, was scarcely, one is here persuaded, a spontaneous unqualified growth of nature; yet it was even less a product of the formal drilling and milling which is customarily meant by education.

He appears in his brother's pages only in a succession of glimpses; but occasional as the views are, they are full views, from which one has an indubitable impression of his native traits of mark: his *élan* of mind, his spontaneous talents of observation, his percipience, his sensibility—a sensibility powerfully but not wholly aesthetic, for it is apparent that while the independent youth here pictured may be drawn by the sights and sounds of life, he is hardly one to be engrossed in the spectacle simply as a spectacle, or given up to the songs of sentiment wholly for their own sake, as a poet might be. It is not, however, merely as pictures of the early William James that his brother's chapters have their importance in his biography, but rather as invocations of the household atmosphere in which William James lived his formative years.

These pages of the younger Henry James fill full indeed the view of a remarkable family interior. He speaks at length of their considerable felicities—"those felicities," he writes, "which kept us collectively, so genially interested in almost nothing but each other. . . ." And speaking of such felicities, he necessarily comes soon to their sources, the parents of the house, the elder James and his wife. Of Mrs James the biography—in either Henry James's part of it, or in the letters themselves—has little

<sup>1</sup> The Letters of William James. Edited by his son, Henry James. 10mo. Two volumes in one: 348 and 384 pages. Little, Brown and Company. \$3.

enough to say; but one gathers the reason to have been that she was so inseparably essential to her husband and her family that she was paid the not slight compliment of being taken for granted; if the biography speaks of them, it inevitably speaks of her. Of her husband, the narrative speaks, and must speak, at length. "Mr James," wrote William James, not long after his father's death, "was one of that band of saints and mystics, whose rare privilege it has been, by the mere example and recital of their own bosom-experience, to prevent religion from becoming a fossil conventionalism, and to keep it forever alive."

Yet religious master and great spokesman though the elder James was, it was evident that he was born out of his intellectual place and day. His small following numbered some who were in the van of discernment of their time, but it was a small following indeed. So remote, in fact, was the *Zeitgeist* of his day from the things he held most high, that even upon his own children were his religious ideas of incomplete and uncertain effect. The younger Henry James describes his father's temple of belief—with "doors of fine austere bronze opening straight" into their family life; but wholly unvisited by the children, except William, who later occasionally entered, with, however, "announcements of difference." Much, it is true, has been made of the influence on William James of his father's monism, so termed; he himself credits Charles Renouvier with having freed him from the "monistic superstition" in which he "grew up." But as is pointed out in a recent study of the religious aspects of James's philosophy,<sup>1</sup> it is easy to attach too much importance to this early monism. He can hardly have held it with the clarity and activity of conviction with which he held beliefs he later evolved himself; for passages can be found in his letters to his father which declare important differences in the intellectual points of departure of the two; which show the younger James obliged to strive, and striving without marked success, merely to comprehend his father's simple and sweeping modes of conviction; which show him, indeed, from the first and ever at some remove from his father's mysticism.

It would be a delusion, however, to think that because his ideas were at a remove from his father's ideas, he could not have lived

<sup>1</sup> Religion in the Philosophy of William James. By Julius Seelye Bixler. 8vo. 225 pages. Marshall Jones and Company. \$3.

in great intimacy of spirit with his father. It certainly could not be for nothing in their hearts that the sons of the elder James, were for a considerable span the daily companions of so remarkably and richly inward a man. They might, indeed, owe him few debts of idea; but temperamentally they owed him everything. It was not merely that he transmitted that intensity of human substance which parted William James, for instance, so sharply off from the ordinary, but that he was as well the instructor of his children's ways and capacities of feeling, a shaper of their emotional life, by the force of contact and example, those seemingly simple agencies that steal so many mysterious marches.

The staple influence in the abundant life of feeling and thought in the household of the elder James was what his literary son subsequently described as "the magnificence of meaning that was attached to the word *social*." All indeed that it could hold of great implications was a cornerstone conviction of the elder James. And his affirmation of "the serene immaculate divinity of the social spirit" and "the sheer impregnable truth of human society" was not merely a belief excogitated; it was an emotion of profound, in fact, of mystic conviction, an exaltation. William James records that his father could sit for hours given over to his pan-humanism. It was not merely a mystic emotion; it was a tenet of daily living. For as he believed that heaven has its finest flower in the untrammelled, unselfish intercourse of man with man, so he held that the self and its selfishness, whether in his own heart or another's, were things above all things to be reprobated. In such hands as his this could, and usually did, prove a critical principle of infinite effect; so that his readers are apt to feel that here the world had one of its natural critics of men and things. And few men, as his acquaintances would bear witness by their scars, and their affection for him, could so successfully combine critical aspersions of extreme severity, with genuine and warm celebrations of friendliness, as the elder James; few could so apply diminishment to the victim's egoistic pretensions, and at the same time dilate so sincerely on his worth as a human brother. The elder James was quick to feel a man's humanity and ever cherished it; and he was quite as quick to discern the portentous emptiness of egoism and never wearied in puncturing it.

In so sincere and so deeply feeling a man as the elder James,

it would be reasonable to expect in his family life, in which he thoroughly lived, some reflection of his important convictions, such as that respecting the transcendent value of men as members of society, and their nullity as self-seeking individual egos. Egotism and righteousness—which latter he never tired of demonstrating to be really *self-righteousness*, that is, a form of holy snobbery—these presumably would have lean years in the James household; and the virtues of feeling for which all scope would be afforded would be generosity, sympathy, and *impersonality* of the humane sort, in fact all the essential humanity of which the individual might be capable. And this, practically, was the case.

There is no reason to suppose, in fact, that the four sons of the elder James either grew up exempt from his buffetings of the self and its vanities or that they failed to prosper in the inspiring atmosphere of his presence. The household early became a forum, we learn, and sometimes a pandemonium of opinion, where views had only such right of survival as their sponsors could force by their wits against the ingenious aggressives of humorous but vehement rivals. "It was certainly to their father's talk," says the editor of the Letters, "that both William and Henry owed their own wealth of resource in ordinary speech."

It seems evident, in good fact, in the case of William James, that this enthusiastic family forum was both a school of disputation and a school of style. It could be more accurately said of his style than of almost any other that its merits and defects are the merits and defects of felicitous forensic talk. "Sound communication between minds" was the single principle of expression, he held, and "energy of epithet" the sole by-consideration. The qualities of his writing which drew so many were its succinctness, its fecund, smiting particularity, its open-spoken declarative fire. Its very defects as a rhetoric of strict idea indicate its character as vivid talk written down; for many of his phrases, such as the "will to believe" and the "cash-value" of truth were egregiously misunderstood, since his readers, some wilfully, some perhaps because they could do no better, took him at his word when he evidently expected to be permitted such departures from literality as one readily takes in conversation, with the assistance of those worlds of expressive resource which lie in intonation, inflexion, and gesture. Had he not written so im-



mediately as he thought and spoke, had he been more given to literary premeditation, he could probably have prevented some of this misunderstanding, or at least rescued himself from some of the responsibility for it; or had he been talking *viva voce* to his readers, still using the same words he had written, they would doubtless have *felt* his meaning more truly.

But the family forum, in which the elder James was so gifted a "moderator," was, one suspects, far more than a school of speech and disputation for his sons; it was an academy of temperament and feeling, a school of heart. In William James himself, certainly, there is evidence enough of plenteous and resplendent lessons in feeling. With regard to this point the comments of John Jay Chapman in his reminiscences of William James seem notable not merely for empyrean enthusiasm but for penetration.

"I used occasionally," he says, "to write and speak to James about his specialties in a tone of fierce contempt; and never failed to elicit from him in reply the most spontaneous and celestial gayety. . . . He himself was perfected from the beginning, a self-less angel."

One can hardly escape the force of the word *self-less*; it points home to the captain jewel of William James's temperament. He *was* self-less. His personality was impersonality in its best essence; egoism had no place in the economy of his spirit; in him the puny principality of the ego was absorbed in a great natural and abundantly cultivated humanity.

Any one inclined to discount the force of this quality in William James ought first to reflect upon his relations with his countless readers. Some numbers of them—if one may judge by the smoothness to which a decade or more of quotation has worn many of his pronouncements upon our inner being—have found durable satisfactions in him; yet satisfactions that may not lie quite in the strict noon of the intellect, that possibly are of more elemental concern to men than the conscious satisfactions of the intellect, that may, in fact, support the intellect and initiate its concerns, urging it ever to fresh woods and pastures new. This multifarious quotation, acknowledged and unacknowledged, indicates the aptness to the fundamental affairs of the human spirit of many things

said in the *Principles of Psychology*, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, and *The Will to Believe*; all are books bethumbed in public libraries. There have even been symptoms among those who make Inspiration their profession, that they will appropriate William James, as long ago they took Emerson, for an uncanonized saint of the evangel. Texts from William James, indeed, are quarried freely by men of quite various party, by men, in fact, who have no use for each other, who could have no use for each other, down to the last afternoon of time. What do they all find? They find a modern Prometheus; they find, surely, a great human voice.

Considerations of temperament have prevailed in what has gone before. And to attempt to turn now to matters more strictly mental is to observe that one may not abruptly leave the things of feeling for the things of mind. Thought emerges from feeling; thought *is* feeling, is such part of feeling as becomes articulate. If, therefore, in speaking of the temperament of William James one emphasizes his humanity, so in speaking of his mind, stress ought first to be laid upon his open-mindedness; and these very words are nearly a tautology; their systems of meaning certainly overlap, and they are exchangeable in some contexts, though not in others.

Perhaps we shall do best, accordingly, to say that it was a characteristic emotional *and* intellectual satisfaction that he took in the verse of I Corinthians: "And base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yes, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are." This temper is to be found in all of his intellectual dealings—in his support, so costly to himself, of the much derogated psychical research; in his championship in his psychology, of the indefinite and the relative, those border-marches of the mental life, so neglected in his day; in his appearance at the Boston State House in 1898 on the occasion when the medical licensing bill was under consideration, to defend the rights of "mental healers" to recognition by the law. And what could his pluralism be but a defence of the truth of "the humble particular" against the arrogance of the "apriorists"? What, if we consider it in terms of individuality, was pragmatism, that "looking away from first things, principles, 'categories,' supposed

necessities; and looking towards last things, fruits, consequences, facts," but a formula of open-mindedness?

We may call this trait intellectual or temperamental as we will. But we may hardly say that it was in its origin an intellectual acquirement, or that he had it first from Agassiz, or Chauncey Wright, or Charles Renouvier, or Shadworth Hodgson, or any others of those who are credited with a share in the forming of his mind. In the beginning and well into its growth, it was surely a matter of feeling, a gift of heart, which he had from his father and his father alone. We shall hardly see what share the elder James had in the contents of his son's mind; it was, perhaps, not a great deal. But it is surely not too much to say that he had all to do with the temperamental founding and first forming of that mind; making of it, as his other son said, "a mind incapable of the shut door in any direction."

William James, however, was prompt enough in his declarations of mental independence. His earliest comings and goings in the pages of his brother have an air, a self-possession, which though it was not in his case exactly pride of mind, was such a characteristic as the acutely percipient are apt to have in their intercourse with their less discerning fellows; and he seems, indeed, from his earliest time, a true exemplar of his own later doctrine that the mind is not a *tabula rasa* passively in receipt of experience, but an incalculable agent, acting upon events in ways of its own to make its destiny. Some suggestion has already been made of the strongly aesthetic character of his sensibility. But his sensibility might be never so aesthetic; it might draw him into art and painting, as it did for a while; it might on the one hand be a potent aid to healthy-mindedness in his approaching crises of intellect, and on the other a physical handicap, in the intensity and delicacy of nervous organization which it implied; artist and analyst might be never so closely matched in him his life long, and the artist ever qualify and enrich the *dicta* of the analyst. Nevertheless it is clear that his intellect and not his sensibility very early came into command of his mental scene.

The persuasions upon him of his intellect, and its absorption in the "natural constitution of things" were not merely great; they were overweening. In spite of his aesthetic sense, ever vivid and

voluminous, of the excellent world about, his strongest interests, as we learn from one of the earlier of his letters, lay in "the most general," that is, in metaphysical questions. He was scarcely twenty-three when he reached the conviction, never to be departed from, that the life of speculative thought was the only existence in which he could find scope for his dearest inclinations. He went on with the study of medicine after he had reached that conviction, it is true; nevertheless, from then on he was really preparing to embark, and embarking on the speculative voyages of the mind. His first ventures, one gathers, were not merely unprofitable; they were unwholesome, for they landed him on the shores of scepticism, where he contracted a formidable case of metaphysical melancholy. How formidable it was, may be inferred from the fact that it brought him, in his twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth year, as he hinted at the time to his father, and later admitted in a letter to Thomas W. Ward, well balanced and normal-hearted as he was, to the contemplation of suicide; and in his twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth year, brought him, as we learn from his disguised deposition in the *Varieties of Religious Experience*, within sight of insanity. The story of this double crisis is, surely, the central drama of his education.

Before he reached this crisis, however, his education received an accession probably of vital assistance to him then, and certainly of importance generally in view of the directions which his thought subsequently took. When he gave up painting he turned promptly to science, that is, to chemistry first and then to natural history. The influence of the famous Agassiz was then in the ascendant; and when in 1865, the Thayer expedition to South America took ship under the leadership of Agassiz, William James, twenty-three years old, was one of the journeyman-naturalists taken along. The letters he wrote home from South America are biographically among the most significant of his letters. They make clear the two vital things he learned. The first of these was that his vocation was the life of thought; the second, for which he apparently gave the whole credit to his contacts with Agassiz, is best shown in a characteristic passage of his letter to his father of September 12th, 1865: "No one," he there writes, "sees farther into a generalization than his own knowledge of details extends, and you have a greater feeling of weight and solidity about the movement

of Agassiz's mind, owing to the continual presence of this great background of special facts, than about the mind of any other man I know." He was deeply impressed, as we can perhaps infer, when we find him writing a year later to his friend Thomas W. Ward: "I feel somehow, now, as if I had no right to an opinion on any subject . . . until I know some one thing as thoroughly as it can be known."

These direct and indirect comments upon Agassiz seem, indeed, to be the first important appearance of that ideal of intellectual action, which when it grew into full being was the fountain-head of the intense pragmatic thoroughness of thinking-out which ever characterized James in his subsequent work. Such comments may, for instance, describe the origin and first conditions of the reason, when he came to make his contribution to the natural history of consciousness, the *Principles of Psychology*, that he was twelve years thinking, testing, writing out what he had first planned for two. He himself, in fact, expresses with emphasis his sense of the importance of this passage in his education: "The hours spent with Agassiz," he says, in the sentence from his commemorative address on Agassiz, quoted in the *Letters*, "so taught him the difference between all possible abstractionists and all livers in the light of the world's concrete fulness that he was never able to forget it." One may additionally gather how expressive this comment was, by setting beside it one of the *sententiae* in which Mr Santayana recorded his impressions of James: "Probably," he says, "James found no one among the philosophers whom he cared to resemble."

But important as this episode was, it seems hardly to be supposed that William James was drawn out of his orbit by it. Is not the probability indeed considerable that the impression made by Agassiz upon James was really due to the fact that the disposition to which James was thus apparently influenced was already inherent in him? His artist's sensibility and his talents for concrete observation, to say no more, were not previously inert in the presence of the actual.

The six years, 1866-1872, following William James's return from South America were perhaps outwardly the least eventful and inwardly the most momentous of his life. It was now that he completed the study of medicine, taking his degree in 1869.

Now his health failed (1867), and during the enforced retirement of his search for recovery, first in Europe, and then back in his father's house in Cambridge, he carried forward the immense reading in physiology, psychology, and philosophy, which made him later one of the most widely aware men, professionally, of his day. He was now following through the various sequences of philosophic doubt that were to prove so dangerous to his mental peace and health. Now, in fact, in the double crisis through which he was soon to pass, the outlines of his intellectual character seem to have been enduringly drawn. There might afterwards be much mental amassment and filling in, as much indeed as could come from the intense intellectual industry which filled the hours and weeks of a densely crowded life of the mind; yet when he came out of this period he appeared to possess certain central points of departure whereon he could and did base his every subsequent intellectual enterprise.

He came from his time with Agassiz with the two fundamental sides of his nature in sharper contrast than they had ever yet been. On the one hand he had been persuaded, not merely by the force of Agassiz's example, but by the force of his own temperament, of the necessity to every intellectual undertaking, of deep and wide foundations in fact, and of thorough modes of building upon such foundations; on the other, he was now aware of the gathering headway of his tendency to abstraction; he saw that it would be only when he was making formulas for the "natural constitution of things" that his theoretic inclinations would be stayed. These two tendencies, though they made his essential intellectual character when later forcibly harmonized, were far from harmonious now. There was in him now a discordance so marked that for a considerable time his mental destinies seem to have hung in the balance. The fact may indeed have been that with his opulent sensibility and his phenomenal powers of observation he felt too well the inscrutable, intractable presence of the real; universal formulas, as he later declared, are the easier made the fewer the facts they consider. At all events his theoretic tendency harmonized ill with the rest of his nature, brought him to no practicable conclusions, kept him wandering empty-handed over the barrens of scepticism. Yet it was apparently, as he said, the strongest tendency in him.



There would not be space, and there is perhaps no need to quote biographic allusions to the steps of his progress toward the choice and crisis of his career. The time finally came, however, apparently in his twenty-eighth year, when he saw that a kind of choice was possible between his theoretic tendency and the rest of his nature, and more, he may have seen that such a choice was vital to intellectual survival. In the description of it, contained in his note-book entry of April 30th, 1870, included with the Letters, one can afford to neglect no word, though the length of the passage makes abridgement imperative here:

"I think," he writes, "that yesterday was a crisis in my life. I finished the first part of Renouvier's second 'Essais' and see no reason why his definition of Free Will—'the sustaining of a thought *because I choose to* when I might have other thoughts'—need be the definition of an illusion. At any rate I will assume for the present—until next year—that it is no illusion. My first act of free will shall be to believe in free will. For the remainder of the year, I will abstain from the mere speculation in which my nature takes most delight, and voluntarily cultivate the feeling of moral freedom. . . . Hitherto, when I have felt like taking a free initiative, like daring to act originally, without carefully waiting for contemplation of the external world to determine all for me, suicide seemed the most manly form to put my daring into; now I will go a step further with my will, not only act with it, but believe as well; believe in my individual reality and creative power . . ."

How the sound of this determination reverberates through subsequent passages of James's most characteristic eloquence! What an accession of biographic significance it is to *The Will to Believe*! For what is that famous essay but a generalization of the "choice of risks" which he had here made, into the right of everyone to a similar choice? Such choice might have a look of artificiality in that he put aside his questions arbitrarily; and there might be and was some impugning both of his will to believe and his pragmatism on such or similar grounds. It was, in fact, a pragmatic choice he had now made, as it was a pragmatic choice he later advocated; but it was a human choice, a real choice, a choice to



survive. Who shall say that the event did not approve his pragmatism in here casting his lot with the human, particularist, fact-loving side of his nature? Did not the bulk of his subsequent Promethean achievement—his psychology, his pluralism, his pragmatism, his fine treatment of religious experience—issue really from this choice?

At all events such was his choice; he stopped his ears against the sirens of abstraction; not entirely, perhaps, but largely. How largely he did so, we may gather from the much his adverse critics have since made of the point that his philosophy was unmetaphysical. One of them says: "James does his philosophizing openly, I may say almost cynically, through his sentiments and his preferences, even through his temperament. . . ." These are steep-up words; but are they not merely a derogatory description of the consistency with which he carried out the implications of his choice? He could hardly, by that choice, have been the metaphysicians' metaphysician. Philosophy, he thus came to hold, was a personally achieved vision of "truth possible" before it was reasoned structure; the true parent of philosophies was man's inherent need of beliefs to live by; all the great philosophical books were really personal, "like so many men." This is persuasive; it is true; but other conceptions, also, are possible. Compare the astral detachment of Bertrand Russell's definition: "Philosophy is a highly refined, highly civilized pursuit; demanding for its success a certain liberation from the life of instinct, a certain aloofness from mundane hopes and fears." A certain aloofness? Any aloofness, one fears, is too much to request of so vividly human a genius as William James. He might indeed have his eye finally upon the infinite, but from the time of his choice onward he certainly held that the true mode to the infinite was by way of the actual. And if he characteristically chose, for his particular sphere of the infinite, the inner infinite, then the actual by which he would approach it would be the inner individual actual; and that, whatever else one may say of it, is seldom aloof, is seldom disjoined from mundane hopes and fears.

Thus if his philosophy was not metaphysical, it was introspective to the last limits of his great attainments. If it was not philosophy, it did have for its not negligible values those of a great realistic psychology carried to high places. Its author might

not be a system-maker, but he was by virtue of his wide acquirements, his accomplished pragmatic dialectic, and his intense introspection, a formidable critic of systems. Quite true it might be that he "did his philosophizing through his temperament"; but this is hardly the utter derogation that it may have been meant to be. Is it not, as the elder James once said, "the mere wantonness of criticism to demand of a writer what it is plainly impossible that he should have been"? We may readily concede that the gifts of logic, strict and strait, are scarcely to be found in the works of one who found the utterances of his compeer, the incisively, the brilliantly logical Charles S. Peirce, "very nearly incomprehensible"; we shall have to look further for logic—in the frosty if bracing air of more ultra-modern intellectual cathedrals. But do we not still have in James the great introspective gifts of appreciation, of discernment into humanity, the gifts of insight?

Was it not really the pragmatic education of his insight that was the fundamental aim in the much of his life that may appear irrelevant to metaphysics—in the intellectual wanderings at large of his youth; in his time at Newport, studying painting with John La Farge as his fellow; in his days with Agassiz; in his medical degree; in his teaching of anatomy and physiology and his monumental years in psychology; in his multifarious readings in biography? As prolegomena to the abstractions of strict metaphysics these mundane doings seem rather roundabout, to say no more; especially when we find their doer taking up the formalities of philosophy rather late in his day, so late that night must inevitably have come before he could even formally state his position satisfactorily to himself. But if one consider them as the preoccupations by which great gifts of discernment are prepared for, or rather are practised in—for it was inherent with him and he could no more have taken it up than he could have laid it down—the philosophy that is vision into the common inwardness of men, that is the vocation of insight, that is less a logically integrated system, than a naturally organic body of criticism, then one can see the pertinence of these many dealings with the realities of individual inward experience.

It would appear from his biography that this pragmatic education of William James was his own doing, since his thought swings in so many senses upon the axis of that early "free-will" decision,

when he appears also to have felt what he later said: "Fact makes itself somehow and our business is far more with its *What* than with its *Whence* or *Why*"; when, accordingly, he put from him his inclination for the extreme and utter reaches of speculation, put it from him, not as he said, "until next year," but for his life—in certain important ways, as the event showed; put it from him, although it was his strongest desire. Yet may we not question its strength? Certainly it was not strong singly to any very productive purpose, and certainly it was not stronger than the rest of his desires and feelings together, that is, his temperament. Is not this so critical choice, indeed, to be recognized as that choice by temperament which he himself meant when he said several times in after-years, though taken to task for it, that philosophies were the products of temperament? And if we come back to temperament, do we not come back to the elder Henry James? William James was without his father's mystic sources of conviction; yet he was otherwise, perhaps, too like his father, too much the Promethean, too human, not merely by native bent, but by early paternal nurture, to contemplate imperturbably, aloofly, the fate of man as he seemed to behold it from the standpoint of his early intellectualist sceptical abstraction.

## JUGGLERS

BY MANUEL KOMROFF

A TROUPE of Japanese jugglers were giving an exhibition in the square before the railroad station on the morning that Dundee left. The whole town was out to see the fun and nobody paid any attention to Dundee.

The train arrived and waited five minutes before it departed. From the car window he could see over the heads of the people. The youngest of the jugglers was on his back with his arms folded under his head; his legs, covered with white tights, were up in the air and with his nimble feet he kept rotating a small light barrel. He would throw it high into the air and catch it with his feet and he would also spin it around on one toe and slap the hollow sides with the flat of his other foot. In the end he used it for a drum and beat time loud and steady in a regulation military rhythm, like the song: "What the hell do we care, what the hell do we care. Hail! Hail! . . ."

It was hard to keep your feet still for it made you want to march.

Slowly the train drew away from this scene. Nobody said good-bye. Mildred Marsh was at work in the factory. The girl he loved was now left behind. And he rode away to find the world that he knew was filled with the things he wanted. He rode away to a tune beat by a juggler's foot. . . .

He had always been told that a great city is a lonely place, but this he did not find quite so, for at no time did he really feel himself alone. He was alive with plans, schemes, and methods, all directed toward one end—to the good things in the world of desire.

It was like something electrical that drew him near and made him wish with a yearning eagerness that was almost a passion. Often he dreamed how things could and might become and in all his dreams appeared the hero victorious.

He was young; he was enthusiastic and lived in a mental paradise. Everything seemed promising and cheering for he felt certain that good things were due to fall to him. Why not? He became alive and awake and followed the advice of a friend who was born of the earth and knew the world.

People in the world all seemed so eager to get on. . . . On to success! And he did as they did. He manoeuvred for position.

It was difficult for Dundee to break down a natural shyness in his nature. He was timid and apprehensive, but he knew that these traits were bad and would hold him back. The proverb about the faint heart and the fair lady often came to his mind and he did his best to fight against it. He tried to cover and disguise his real feelings and often pretended to be brazen and bold. It was as though he were trying to be a different person than himself, but he knew it was necessary because the world worshipped the Spartan and the hero never dies.

"I have already learnt my lesson," he wrote in a letter to his girl. "The world is a place where one has to put up a front, make a show, and if necessary fight for what is your due. If you give in an inch they will take a yard and if you only allow it, your friends will walk all over you and then ride. Let the preachers talk all they want about brotherhood; it's all right in heaven, but it doesn't work down here. You must fight for everything you get and if you yell loud enough you will get attention and that which is due you. If you don't you will find yourself without anything."

Were these words that he wrote really his own or were they dictated by his friend the stranger? They sounded so much like the stranger that it is hard to say. Yet perhaps the stranger would have said the same thing in a more forceful way. No doubt he would have intensified it by saying that meekness was the world's greatest crime. Yes, you can almost hear him with his slow tired voice speaking as though to nobody in particular.

"Meekness is the crime. It is watery and weak and grows upon you like the habit of opium. It makes you close your eyes to what is really around you and the ladder of your life will bring you only downward. Meekness will force you to descend rung by

rung until you have unwillingly sunk to a depth and become part of the dregs of the bottom."

In the boarding-house where Dundee lived was an old man who kept very much to his room where he had several shelves of pamphlets and catalogues and a piano. He was a retired school-master living on a little pension. A meek, quiet life. A little sad; but silent and proud.

At first there were long evenings when Dundee sat alone in his little room and listened to the old man downstairs playing the piano. Sometimes he went to his room while he was playing and would sit in a corner and listen in silence. It all sounded so far away and it gave him a strange mixed feeling of happy and sad. . . . The old man played on and on. His dark wrinkled fingers barely touched the white keys. It was almost like a sculptor working his white marble; only instead of a powdery dust that hung like a snow in the air about the statue, a network of sound was woven across the room and floated in and out as though it were suspended in a magic sea. And the treasures that it brought to your feet came from a world that was not this, not anything at all like our world.

It brought things of great colour. Things dark—entirely unknown—and things sublime. Things of great beauty.

You enjoy them all, but the moment you attempt to lift them out of the network of sound the cords seem to crumble to a powder, like cigarette ash, and once the net is broken the treasures vanish and you yourself are left standing alone among your own sordid possessions.

How poverty-stricken it all seems! How poor and mean!

"The great treasures of the world are often before you," said the old man one evening, "but you must not grab at them and you must not even touch them for they are made of a texture that is too sheer, too fine for the greedy fingers of man. Oh, how we want them! We think they could serve us well, but little realize they were serving us all the time and that we live by their presence and only die by possession. Either they vanish at our touch or we decay and perish with their possession."

Dundee could have lived in their presence so nicely . . . but he

was still young and did not know and when he did learn, it came too late. It came at a time when he was beyond living and could not use it. The great treasures of the world were lost to him for ever.

At one time he had a strange conversation with the old man who played the piano. He asked Dundee why he liked music.

"I don't know why," he answered.

"What do you think of when you hear it?"

"Nothing in particular," he said for he did not want to tell him of the big lattice-work of machinery and of his sweetheart and of the net that is cast and floats in laden with treasures from other worlds. He did not want to tell his secret thoughts. Why should he? Nobody else does. But why must we keep secret the things that really matter? He did not want to tell what his real feelings were, any more than he wanted to tell about his friend who gave him a picture of the world as he found it and advised him how to get ahead and what was the best road to follow.

Nobody told. We are brought up that way. We are instructed in the many ways and devices that can disguise our real feelings. All our senses are truthful, but our speech must lie. We must use it to conceal what we really think. The important things must not be known!

"Nothing at all," he repeated.

"Beethoven was a great master," said the old schoolmaster. "I never tire of playing him. He has a steady and logical flow of ideas. He takes a long breath, and his questioning is serious, but his replies are profound. . . . A great master."

"That is why you like to play him?"

"No. That is not the reason. The real reason I suppose is because he suffered and because of that I can understand him. I understand him because . . . because of many things."

Because of many things? What did he mean? Did he want to say that he liked to play Beethoven because the composer had suffered and recorded his sensations in such a way that they could be communicated? And "because of many things" also meant that he too had suffered. But how, he did not tell. Perhaps Dundee



appeared too flippant to the old schoolmaster or perhaps he did not desire to become intimate; at least these were the impressions that the old man seemed to convey.

Because of many things? What things? The fifty old bottles of salts he had in the bottom drawer of his dresser? The old dusty catalogues of chemical apparatus with marked pages and turned-down leaves that seemed scattered about his room? Were these the things that made him understand?

No. Certainly not. He did not want to tell because he was ashamed. Ashamed of the truth. Ashamed of himself. He had done something that was not right. He had become a failure "because of many things," and he did not want to talk about it. It was too close to the bitter core of his heart and too intimately bound up with the past.

Yes, Dundee said "nothing at all" and the old man disposed of it "because of many things." Was this the meekness that becomes a crime? Or is it modesty or pride? . . .

There are people in the world who seem to go about enveloped in a tranquil and peaceful cathedral-like feeling; as though it were something cool; constructed with a definite play, accurately ruled out, ornamented with chiselled flutings and arabesques that keep on repeating and repeating until the whole structure hangs like a dark cool stone mantle about them to comfort and bring protection from those burning metal suns of desire that send down their scorching beams to play, with teasing serpent-like flames, upon the flesh. All within the stone mantle remains orderly and nobly unified.

There are people who live constantly in its comforting shade, in a little world of peace, indifferent to the raging frenzy about them, indifferent to those rushing around in a mad tarantella and snatching at useless objects, which they take to themselves and hang about their necks like plaques of stone that in the end only chill the heart; totally indifferent to all this they remain firm, and live a small quiet life in agreement with what there is about them, in the shade of cool fluted columns and in tranquillity. A small modest life that uses the little things close at hand that nobody seems to want;—uses up that which remains.

Where is this cathedral-like mantle that can take you under its fold? More magic than the great burning lamp of Arabia; than the Irish rock of laughter. More wonderful in its power than the tooth of Buddha, greater than all the miracles of the Red Lamas of Thibet. What brings you into the quiet and shade? Who folds the mantle about you? What price do you pay or what must you do to be allowed to rest between the columns? How do you ask for this privilege? And whom do you address?

## VIENNA

BY PIERRE LOVING

AURELIUS, he murmured, have you died?  
The city that knew your heel wears a gold comb  
In her hair. It is autumn. There are leaves  
And spires and domes, and it is autumntide.  
The old leaves crack. And did you march from Rome?

Aurelius, he murmured, are you dead?  
Spaded underfoot, you wear this belt of hills  
Forested round. It is autumn: leaves break red  
And gold and wound you with declension, leaves  
Of autumn. . . .

Dusk of autumn dies  
Over the fogblue clusters on the hills. Leaves  
Curl up like lions, leaves, while the plum smoke drives  
Slantingly through air. Dead bones, you whirl like a comet.  
Wind metes you blues and golds. Do I mark your eyes,  
Aurelius? Enigma. Or are you wise?

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LEON ERROL. BY EDWARD NAGLE

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ERNEST BOYD. BY EDWARD NAGLE

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## THE GLASS-STAINER

BY GODFREY DE BERNIERE

WE were more like a band of strolling players, than glass-stainers. There was old Foster—the image of Edward the Seventh—still one of the finest cartoon artists and glass-painters in the stained-glass trade. Stevens himself, half crazy, yet the head of the cartoon and sketch department, Acting Manager while the Boss was ill. We were not surprised that he died. Foster was a great friend of Stevens, both of them Scotchmen, as mean as you make them. Then there was Daw, the foreman of the glass-men, with a consummate eye for colour, and for building up a symphonic window, combined with a cockney accent that twenty years in New York had not improved. Add to this a girl stenographer and an elevator man, who resembled a pirate and had been a sea-pilot in his youth, who now spent most of his time on the roof, chasing some homing pigeons which he raised instead of running the elevator. And we worked, or rather played our various rôles on the sixth floor—the loft of an old deserted building on the East River. It was a strange combination and they seemed to think that I was the strangest one of the lot. Though I told them I was an American, they insisted I was English on account of my accent. Foster in fact thought that I was on some sort of secret mission, God knows what! He would look at me in a knowing way, his beady blue eyes gleaming from under his white shaggy eyebrows. “You are not a Freemason,” he said to me one day. “Why, no!” I answered; but I doubt that he believed me. He then sidled up to me. “Young man,” he said, “you must be careful about Stevens. There is a mystery connected with him and Strong.” (That was the Boss’s name.) “It is better to say nothing and mind one’s own business. He will talk to you, and draw you out, but do not ever wait till too late for the elevator. Why, when we all have to walk down six flights of stairs, after working hours, God knows what might happen. In point of fact, I think he is trying to kill me, hounding me in this way from day to day.”

I had noticed that Foster kept a formidable array of weapons



by his box of charcoal, et cetera. His charcoal-sharpener was a huge carving-knife, and he always kept this box between Stevens and himself.

But Foster was an interesting old codger, notwithstanding. He had worked for William Morris, had known an intimate friend of "Swinny," that was Swinburne—Old Brown, the famous glass-painter of the H.B. and B. in London. Old Brown he described in his slow emphatic manner as being a very beautiful young man. "In point of fact," he would add, "he was 'alarmingly beautiful,' so that he was obliged to powder his hair, in order to look plain." "Many a quid I could have gotten out of old Swinny," Foster used to quote Old Brown as having said to him years ago, in some tedious tale of his which I never could get at the bottom of. But some of his stories were interesting. He had served at the altar twenty years before becoming an atheist; but I think he was still a Catholic at heart, else how could he do the High Church work so well, which he feigned to despise? And no one was a better authority than he on vestments, et cetera.

One of the most amusing of his stories was his account of meeting the Prince of Wales and other crowned heads, every day at lunch in a near-by Third Avenue restaurant. "But how," I asked Mr Foster, "did you know that it was the Prince of Wales?" He raised his eyebrows and looked at me. "Of course," he said, "the young man was dressed as a policeman, but I knew by his boots that he was the Prince of Wales." If one questioned the veracity or possibility of his Baron Munchausen adventures, he would flush with righteous indignation. He was indeed a character, white hair, blue roving eyes, straight as a ramrod, rather rotund, though tall; and a first-rate cartoon artist and draughtsman at the age of seventy-five, in one of the most exacting stained-glass firms in New York. Surely a fine advertisement for the English constitution. But his story of the chita, or Indian hunting leopard, and the seven kinds of cats that he found in Chicago, is perhaps the drollest of all.

Then there was Stevens, the Acting Manager, with his sadistic tendencies, his possible dealing in Black Magic, and his continued cruelty to old Foster, whose fears he played upon as a cat plays with a mouse. There was Stevens, black eyebrows, shaggy grey hair, ruddy face, cold, wide, blue, staring eyes, and a cruel, thick-

lipped mouth—like a Roman Emperor, with an intellectual forehead and the mouth of a sensualist. Stevens, a man who had a marvellous imagination and feeling for Gothic ornament and symbolism, who had been on the stage in early life, and was now playing the part of religious ascetic draughtsman, Stevens who remains a man of mystery, and of whom I am almost afraid to write.

My first experience in working for the Strong Company was a rather pleasant one. Stevens who was like a cat, could draw in his claws, and be all smiles and whiskers though he was clean shaven. He first put me to work on a Gothic canopy. When I had finished, he patted me on the back and said: "Enchantingly done," which of course gave me confidence. Then I worked on the border of the rather Byzantine window, and to my surprise he allowed me to work on the figures themselves—though he had said since I was but an apprentice, he would for the present let me do borders and canopies—in other words, learn Gothic ornament; but that later I could take a hand at the figures. He was expecting to finish them up himself, in his wild manner of drawing. Then he would get old Foster to finish them academically, after he had put in the swing and movement. Academic drawing was beyond him; hence the presence of the painstaking Foster.

Well, when Stevens told me that I could work on the figures, of course I was delighted. I first drew in the two little kneeling angels, one on either side of the Rood. The Christ figure had already been swung in by Stevens and left unfinished. The window, I had best explain, was the illustration of an old monkish hymn which speaks of Christ reigning from the Rood. The central figure was that of our Lord, suspended in front of the Cross in the manner of the Crucifix, but different. For here he was portrayed in priestly robes, cope, chasuble, alb, and crown. Underneath this central figure were the two kneeling angels, and below these—in fact as if they knelt on it—was the dragon, gnawing at the foot or root of the Cross, the short white horn in its upper jaw slanted in defiance, and its rolled eyes showing the whites, its scaly head belching forth flame. Its claws, the curve of its outspread, bat-like pinions, and all its attributes were those of a typical mediaeval dragon such as Britomart might have encountered. Meanwhile the face of Jesus shone down in glory, as it were—annulling the fury of the beast. This idea of the dragon gnawing at the foot of the Cross, and of the

nonchalant angels, was typical of Stevens, whose philosophy of life was about as ruthless and paradoxical as that of the Egyptian sorcerer, Arbaces. Be this as it may, he loved contrasts and paradoxes, and his knowledge was of a weird and wide variety, ranging from Druidic runes, cabalistic writings, British folk-lore, to all sorts of odds and ends of "information" about Chaldean religions. Especially was he up on the mysteries of the mortuary priests of Egypt, but I will tell you later of a conversation between old Foster and himself on this subject.

The days drifted by. I had almost finished the cartoon for the window of Christ in Glory, under which in Gothic letters was to be placed the well-known legend, "Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedech." I noticed that as my work improved Stevens grew colder and harsher towards me every day. But his rude treatment of me was nothing compared with his heartless cruelty to old Foster. When patrons or clients, such as the Camerons, would come to see one of their windows, he would be all smiles and serenity in addressing us, but as soon as they were gone, would bawl out old Foster as if he, Stevens, were the first mate of a pirate brig and Foster, the deck under his feet. Then apparently to make up, he would have long talks with him, detaining him after working hours and telling him blood-curdling tales, which scared him half to death, but which the poor old man was afraid not to listen to, lest Stevens fire him.

His continued insults at last came to a head one morning. I was two hours late for work, the elevator man leered at me and said, "Well, I guess youse just in time for the fight. Stevens and Foster are at it again. Stevens asked young Morris to throw old Foster out, but Morris wouldn't do it. Foster said he would call the cop." By this time we had reached the sixth floor. There was a dead lull, like the calm in a cyclone. Stevens was red in the face, and old Foster was flushed, though very deliberate in his actions. Foster always grew most absurdly dignified when he was angry. Stevens when roused was like an erupting volcano, or his own dragon, belching forth fire. I started to work, after a perfunctory "Good-morning," which no one answered. Suddenly old Foster marches up to Stevens, who was silent as the grave (as a rule he was hopping about on a three-rung ladder like an ungainly bird, standing on one leg, then on the other, and singing fragments from opera arias, beating the air at the same time with his charcoal as if it were a

baton). As nervous usually as an old woman, he was immobile to-day. (I believe he was supposed to play the 'cello.) At any rate, old Foster marches up to him and says, "Sir, I demarnd that you stop insulting me and persecuting me from day to day," to which Stevens made no reply. "And furthermore, sir, I demarnd that you stop doping." Stevens was lamblike. He had gained his wish, namely, to stir the old man up, and it was apparently all that he wanted to do. I asked Arthur Morris, "Does nothing ever come of these fights?" He said, "Oh, no, they cuss each other out, but both are cowards." "One day," the old glass-man Hal Knutt put in, "I remember old Foster marching up in a rage to a young man and suddenly bursting forth with: 'Sir, you are a whore and a policeman,' surely an extraordinary combination for one person." It seemed that these continual naggings and feuds were but safety-valves for two overcharged artistic temperaments, both craving dramatic expression. At least they were so in young Morris' opinion, and I hoped he was right. However, I decided to change my job, for how could I draw saints and angels in that atmosphere?

Life is a mystery, a subtle conundrum, a sphinx in the desert, a relentless dealer in paradoxes, a mockery of humanity. Such were my thoughts as I wandered homeward one night from "the shop," asking myself the old unanswerable questions. But suddenly I remembered that I had forgotten the small sketch that Stevens had told me to do over again. It was my first attempt in water-colour, and I felt rather disappointed at the result. If I could only handle that medium I could command a larger salary, twice or three times the paltry twenty-five I was making. So I started back to the shop with little hope of getting in, as the elevator stopped running at five o'clock and Daw the foreman always locked the shop up before he left. Even if the door on the street had been left open, I doubted that I should keep the Boss from knowing of my carelessness. The sketch was to be submitted to Mr Cameron as an idea for a case-ment window with heraldic arms and decorative martletts for his summer estate, and I dreaded Stevens' wrath if the work were not ready by the next morning. So I returned, tired though I was; but I did not like the idea of going up those six flights of stairs alone. There was an athletic club—run by the old janitor—on the fifth floor of the building and several tough-looking characters were often to be seen lurking round as night came on. So, to fortify my rather unobtrusive courage, I dropped in to Mr Foster's Third Avenue

restaurant, the haunt of royalty, patronized by the Prince of Wales. Here I might have an unsavoury yet wholesome dinner, and might smoke one or two cigarettes, and not be ashamed of my shabby clothes.

I entered. A dazzling row of electric lights on a level with the eyes, a musty smell that challenged appetite, greasy cloths on the table, thick-lipped, hook-nosed people, Russian-Jews and Polacks apparently who seemed to be taking courses in something as they all carried text-books, and several affected horn-rimmed glasses. These and a few rather good-looking Walt-Whitman, open-at-the-throat roughnecks, who disdained collars and wore coarse white cotton shirts in winter, with apparently no underclothes, were the only frequenters of this little restaurant. I failed to see any royalty. Having eaten, I lit a cigarette and mused upon my melancholy state. Would it not be better for me to go to the movies—that refuge of all the disappointed and abandoned? Old Foster had remarked to me that it was the only place where he could get any sleep nowadays; his solitary abode in a riverside rooming house was too full of melancholy thoughts. However, I decided to forgo the pleasure of drinking the Lethean draft of the cinema. I would rally my forces, make the desperate effort to be studious at night, and really try to make something out of my life. Lonely or not, in my empty room, I could read there and I was still able to paint. But was I? It seemed impossible for me to work now, except for those by whom I was employed. So back to the shop I would go, get the sketch, return quickly to my room, and start to work. I brushed the ashes from my cigarette, took my hat and coat, and walked out through the swinging door. It had begun to rain, and I regretted my resolve to return to the shop. Lights shone in the wet pavements—amber, purple, and green. What a colour combination, I thought, for a window, with those touches here and there of ruby and Egyptian blue from the Quick Lunch electric signs over the street. At last I reached our building at the foot of East Twenty-fifth Street. To my surprise, the door to the basement was open—the elevator, of course, being locked; but I mounted the steep stairs behind it. My stumbling footsteps echoed through the building, as I felt my way up, for it was pitch dark, with no lights anywhere. I paused, out of breath, for I thought I heard steps on the landing above me; but it must have been the sound of the wind slamming a door. I started up the next flight,

and suddenly came to a standstill, for I certainly heard the sound of voices rising and falling in a curious chant that seemed to blend with the occasional accompaniment of violin or 'cello. What could it be? I started on again, leaning against the plastered wall from time to time, to get my breath.

At last as I reached the landing on the sixth floor, the sounds of chanting ceased, though I still heard faintly the timbre of a violin. Then there was silence. I mustered courage and pushed open the door. The studio was dark except at the southern end where a window had been "set up" for a customer's inspection. It was now about eight o'clock or after, and the loft was too high to catch the reflection of lights from the street. To my surprise, the window was brightly lit up—or was it the window? For Stevens' work was so mediaeval in treatment that it was sometimes hard to tell a demon from an angel. It glowed with all the colours of the rainbow, emerald green, crimson, purple, rose, magenta, lavender, and gold. But red seemed the dominant chord. At first I thought it depicted Christ reigning from the Rood, but I was horrified to see instead a brown-bodied satyr with the haunches and hoofs of a goat. The head, however, was that of a young man "alarmingly beautiful," as old Foster would have said. The eyes gleamed with a malignity which seemed intensified by the red glass in the sockets. The figures hovered in front of the cross—a kind of Byzantine cross—the olive-brown torso writhing in the fantastic contortions of a dance, though the fixity of the eyes was terrifying. I noticed two crumpled, goat-like horns emerging from the orange-gold hair which seemed actually a flame of fire; the whole figure glowed with an unearthly effulgence; it seemed alive. As my eyes grew accustomed to the dark, I saw that the shop had been arranged with benches cross-wise, as in a church, and that there must have been some twenty persons seated in the obscurity. The light, besides what came from the window, was the dull red flame of an altar lamp just below it, and I could see the tall figure of old Foster in fantastic vestments swinging an incense thurifer. To the right of the altar was a half-stooping figure clad in a Benedictine monk's black garb, the cowl drawn over the head. Plainly by the gross mouth and sharp eyes, it was none other than Stevens. But what amazed me most was not the finding here, of these eccentric creatures officiating at some kind of black mass more or less in keeping with their characters, but to see before me—stretched out on a kind



of altar—our bobbed-haired Irish stenographer. She seemed to be clad in a kind of diaphanous stuff which showed off her lithe young figure as if she were almost nude. Honoria, our practical book-keeper, who was always flirting with the old janitor, and looked upon the whole company as a bunch of nuts. What could Honoria be doing here? She seemed indeed to be doing nothing—to be passive and a medium for the performance. Again I heard the sound of music. I could now see that the cowed figure was playing on a 'cello, while old Foster genuflected and muttered to himself. Two by two members of the congregation rose from their seats, went up to the altar, genuflected, and in some mysterious way vanished. I heard the groaning voice of the old man, and the bleating of the 'cello. The sulphurous smell of incense was in my nostrils. What could it all be about, anyway? The cowed figure motioned to me to make obeisance, but I hesitated; the whole thing seemed so absurd. Apparently angry, he then waved his hand to two members of the congregation—glass-men who did the leading—and these stalwarts youths strolled up to me, seized me by the shoulder, shook me and shook me, and then I felt cold water on my face. Suddenly light seemed to dawn. I looked around; there was no one in the shop, and bending over me was the night watchman, his eyes looking solicitously into mine. He was standing beside me, resting one hand on my shoulder.

"You are all right, kid," he said, "I found you lyin' on the fifth landin'. The sign of the Athletic Club fell and struck you on the head. Them guys ought to had that sign mended. I brought youse up here to the sixth floor; I knew youse belonged up here. I was a-playin' the old accordeon and singin' to myself when I heard a bang. 'There goes one of them spooks,' I says to myself; I went downstairs kind of scared-like, and there was you a-lyin' as pale as a ghost, with a cut on your forehead and the blood runnin'. But cheer up, sonny, youse was a long time comin' to, but it ain't such a bad cut."

There was no mirage of old Foster in cope and mitre, or of the cowed figure of my boss. I looked to the south end of the shop. There was the window—"Christ reigning from the Rood." Dawn over the black roofs of Manhattan was now lighting up the three figures, the triple crown and halo, and the haloes of the kneeling angels.





*Courtesy of the New Gallery*

PORTRAIT. BY RAOUL DUFY



## POWHATAN'S DAUGHTER

BY HART CRANE

The swift red flesh, a winter king—  
Who squired the glacier woman down the sky?  
She ran the neighing canyons all the spring;  
She spouted arms; she rose with maize—to die.

And in the autumn drouth, whose burnished hands  
With mineral wariness found out the stone  
Where prayers, forgotten, streamed the mesa sands?  
He holds the twilight's dim, perpetual throne.

Mythical brows we saw retiring—loth,  
Disturbed, and destined, into denser green.  
Greeting they sped us, on the arrow's oath:  
Now lie incorrigibly what years between . . .

There was a bed of leaves, and broken play;  
There was a veil upon you, Pocahontas, bride—  
O Princess whose brown lap was virgin May;  
And bridal flanks and eyes hid tawny pride.

I left the village for dogwood. By the canoe  
Tugging below the mill-race, I could see  
Your hair's keen crescent running, and the blue  
First moth of evening take wing stealthily.

What laughing chains the water wove and threw!  
I learned to catch the trout's moon whisper; I  
Drifted how many hours I never knew,  
But, watching, saw that fleet young crescent die—

And one star, swinging, take its place, alone,  
Cupped in the larches of the mountain pass—  
Until, immortally, it bled into the dawn.  
I left my sleek boat nibbling margin grass . . .

## POWHATAN'S DAUGHTER

I took the portage climb, then chose  
A further valley-shed; I could not stop.  
Feet nozzled the webs of upper flows;  
One white veil gusted from the very top.

O Appalachian Spring! I gained the ledge;  
Steep, inaccessible smile that eastward bends  
And northward nestles in that violet wedge  
Of Adirondacks!—wisped of azure wands,

Over how many bluffs, tarns, streams I sped!  
—And knew myself within some boding shade:—  
Grey tepees tufting the blue knolls ahead,  
Smoke swirling through the yellow chestnut glade . . .

A distant cloud, a thunder-bud—it grew,  
That blanket of the skies: the padded foot  
Within,—I heard it; till its rhythm drew,  
—Siphoned the black pool from the heart's hot root.

A cyclone threshes in the turbine crest,  
Swooping in eagle feathers down your back;  
Know, Maquokeeta, greeting; know death's best;  
—Fall, Sachem, strictly as the tamarack!

A birch kneels. All her whistling fingers fly.  
The oak grove circles in a crash of leaves;  
The long moan of a dance is in the sky.  
Dance, Maquokeeta: Pocahontas grieves . . .

And every tendon scurries toward the twangs  
Of lightning deltaed down your sabre hair.  
Now snaps the flint in every tooth; red fangs  
And splay tongues thinly busy the blue air.

Dance, Maquokeeta! snake that lives before,  
That casts his pelt, and lives beyond! Sprout, horn!  
Spark, tooth! Medicine-man, relent, restore—  
Lie to us—dance us back the tribal morn!

Spears and assemblies: black drums thrusting on—  
O yelling battlements—I, too, was liege  
To rainbows currying each pulsant bone:  
Surpassed the circumstance, danced out the siege!

And buzzard-circleted, screamed from the stake;  
I could not pick the arrows from my side.  
Wrapped in that fire, I saw more escorts wake—  
Flickering, sprint up the hill groins like a tide.

I heard the hush of lava wrestling your arms,  
And stag teeth foam about the raven throat;  
White cataracts of heaven in seething swarms  
Fed down your anklets to the sunset's moat.

O, like the lizard in the furious noon,  
That drops his legs and colours in the sun,  
—And laughs, pure serpent, Time itself, and moon  
Of his own fate, I saw thy change begun!

And saw thee dive to kiss that destiny  
Like one white meteor, pursuant and blent  
At last with all that's consummate and free  
There, where the first and last gods hold thy tent.

Thewed of the levin, thunder-shod and lean,  
Lo, through what infinite seasons dost thou gaze—  
Across what bivouacs of thy angered slain,  
And see'st thy bride immortal in the maize!

Totem and fire-gall, slumbering pyramid—  
Though other calendars now stack the sky,  
Thy freedom is her largesse, Prince, and hid  
On paths that knewest best to claim her by.

High unto Labrador the sun strikes free  
Her speechless dream of snow, and stirred again,  
She is the torrent and the singing tree;  
And she is virgin to the last of men . . .

## POWHATAN'S DAUGHTER

West, west and south! winds over Cumberland  
And winds across the llano grass resume  
Her hair's warm sibilance, her breasts are fanned  
O stream by slope and vineyard—into bloom!

And when the caribou slant down for salt  
Do arrows thirst and leap? Do antlers shine  
Alert, star-triggered in the listening vault  
Of dusk?—And are her perfect brows to thine?

We danced, O Brave, we danced beyond their farms,  
In cobalt desert closures made our vows . . .  
Now is the strong prayer folded in thine arms,  
The serpent with the eagle in the boughs.

## PARIS LETTER

*September, 1927*

**A**NDRE MAUROIS, I am inclined to believe, has just given us in his *Vie de Disraeli* his most prepossessing book. Although *Ariel*, his biography of Shelley, is perfect of its kind, I think it has been surpassed. The peculiar exoticism of Disraeli's personality, his moral pliancy, political audacity, and literary amateurism, and his dilettantic attitude towards life, have all conspired to give the book colour and subtlety and were sure to stimulate the pen, the imagination, and the critical intelligence of a writer like Maurois. Who, under the circumstances, would not have staked everything on Maurois and played him as the winner in the great literary biographic Derby? Humour; psychological insight; a taste for research work; a political sense; the power to paint vast historical backgrounds in keeping with the respective stages in the life of the hero (in this instance it is the period following Napoleon and contemporary with the rise of industry; early Victorian England; modern England of 1878, of the Congress of Berlin, and of the beginnings of imperialism)—what a diversity of talents must one not possess to qualify as an expert in fictional biography? Maurois has them all. He has been accused of having not sufficiently emphasized the strange and oriental aspect of Disraeli, this first Asiatic minister with the adopted name who, pallid and dark, and lost among so many blonds, dominated a Nordic race. I do not share this view. The curious thing about Disraeli to me is the figure he presents of a conservative Jew, a conformist (though he had been on the point of becoming the opposite) an Oriental gentleman, a sensualist disciplined by cant, admiring an English power then at its zenith, taking life as it came, and putting his intelligence at the service of order. Maurois, who has been able to identify himself so perfectly with Disraeli, had no cause to interpret him as a prophet of anarchy and revolt. He has kept strictly to the facts, and has at the same time succeeded in writing his vividest and most profound book.

The *Vie de Chopin* by G. de Pourtalès appears at a time when



on every hand garlands and speeches are being made ready for the hundredth anniversary of romanticism. The entrance of Chopin into the nineteenth century, his refulgence, his whole life of tumult and genius, are like an epitome of the era. His mother was Polish and his father Lorraine French, an heroic crossbreeding which frequently took place after the revolutions of '30, '48, and '63, but never with such success. Love-affairs at the Conservatoire, "pure as a tear"; love-affairs with Georges Sand, less pure, in the then fantastic setting of Venice and the Balearic Islands; and finally, without even speaking of his work, his death as grand and simple as a death in Antiquity—such episodes have been excellently rendered by Pourtalès. Though not so good as the Liszt, this *Vie de Chopin* is a very valuable addition to the series of fictional biographies which are in so many ways serving to instruct the uninformed of our century, a far from inconsiderable body, while cleverly arresting also the attention of the diffident or the distracted, who are legion. "Teach by amusing"—this slogan of the popular magazines no longer seems laughable to an era which refuses to be taught in any other manner.

In *Mon Ami Robespierre* M Henri Béraud gives us an impressive study of the French Revolution. His book, an historical novel, is rich in legend and poetry, and recalls the great lyric frescoes by Michelet which treat of the same period.

The matter of the relationship between Orient and Occident remains one of the topics of the day. Less steeped in Oriental philosophy than Central Europe and less familiar with conditions in Asia than the United States, France has been discovering these problems with evident satisfaction, only to thrust them right into the midst of our domestic political issues. So at all events the philosopher of the extreme right, theorist and critic of the *Action Française*, Henri Massis, has done in his book, *La Défense de l'Occident*. The work is an intelligent, lucid study, well documented and to the point. The "Asiatic wave," which extends all the way from a predilection for screens to an obscure brand of metaphysics with political Messianism somewhere in between the two, is coldly analysed by Massis, who refuses to be tricked by words and endeavours to accustom our eyes to this menace of the East in showing us that imperialism lurks behind it, at Berlin and Moscow. Germany the advance guard of the Orient in Europe?

M Massis succeeds at times in convincing us of this. But should he not on the contrary show us another Germany, a Germany which was, and still is, the first Occidental rampart against Slavism and Asiaticism? He makes the mistake of preserving silence on that point. But I object on more serious grounds. His solution of the problem, the panacea which he eulogizes, is a return to the Holy See of Rome, i.e., a return to Catholic order, in contrast to mass disorder and the Asiatic hordes. He seems to recommend our simply cancelling all world history since the Reformation and the French Revolution, and making a new start. Is M Massis not going a little too fast? He forgets that the Reformation gave birth to that immense moral and political entity which is named the Anglo-Saxon *bloc* and which has since become the sole rampart of the white race. How much weight would Rome have without London and New York? M Massis does not stop to consider these significant facts, which might very easily and impressively be translated into figures. . . . Could he permit himself any other solution than the one which he advocates—a kind of second Holy Roman Empire? He is much given to abstractions and when he rises to topics of a more general nature his sense of proportion and his practical knowledge of the world seem to fail him at times despite his intelligence.

I have had previous occasion to speak of the *Tentation de l'Occident* by M André Malraux, who is M Massis' junior by fifteen years. His book and that of M Massis supplement each other like the wings of a diptych, since he in turn confronts the two civilizations, the yellow and the white, but with a violent sympathy for the former and an obvious willingness to see the latter go under. It is an attitude common to the "intelligentsia." M Malraux is associated with the Super-Realist group, whose extra-literary attachment to communism is well known, and he evidently delights in these pessimistic visions of an Occidental *Götterdämmerung*, with the crash of civilizations, the firing of cities, and the collapse of the great capitalist banks. In the form of an imaginary correspondence—after the manner of the eighteenth century—between a young Frenchman and a young Chinese, he discusses the two races in a critical dialogue at times compact and at times lyrical and verbose. Europe is action, anguish; Asia is contemplation, calm. But M Malraux is too well acquainted with the situation in Asia not to

know that there is no longer in fact any but one universal colour, any but one world-wide climate: a uniformity of disquietude and of despair. He says this himself, by way of conclusion: "The deep voice of destruction is already resounding in the farthest reaches of Asia." What then? Is it really worth while to turn in our quest for perfection towards an Orient which is no better than we, or not even our equal, since it has all the shortcomings of our age of speed and machinery, with none of its advantages?

"Just where are standardization and its natural corollary, over-production, leading us?" M André Siegfried asks himself in turn. Are we soon to see an America which, through an exaggerated concern for output, comes to forget the very purpose of living, or in the words of Lucretius, "*propter vitam vitae perdere causas*"? Indications are that the Americans have taken the torch of civilization from the hand of England, that they have become the leaders of the white race, and that the dominions, British and others, will look to them henceforth. But is not the United States for its part jeopardizing the entire future of the white race by an excess of industrial and commercial efficiency? M Siegfried's scientific qualities, his caution, and his reputation as a sociologist and as a moderate political writer raise him far above the ordinary investigator. His recent book, *Les Etats-Unis d'Aujourd'hui*, will certainly be regarded in France as authoritative for many years, and should accordingly be received with interest on the other side of the Atlantic. His pages on America as the world's creditor, on Anglo- and Franco-American relations, and lastly on civilization in the United States, seem to me very close to the truth; and in any case they certainly express what the ablest minds in Europe are thinking of the United States.

The best novels which appeared in Paris last season are Adrienne Mesurat and Thérèse Desqueyroux. The first is by M Julien Green, the young American writing in French whose particularly fortunate *début* with *Mont-Cinère* I mentioned some months ago. This return to the Brontë sisters and particularly to *Wuthering Heights*, in the Paris of 1926, had been both a delight and a surprise. But the characters were strange; the theme—a study of avarice—was perhaps drawn entirely from childhood reminiscences; in short, we were wondering whether the author could repeat his

success and, already an interesting "case," if he was now to become a great writer. With Adrienne Mesurat, M Julien Green has unquestionably borne off the laurels which some people had still hesitated to accord him. Without sacrificing any of his previous qualities of ruggedness, sombre analysis, and penetration, without resorting to stylistic mannerism or to theatrical "gags," M Green has treated his subject—the strenuous adolescence of a girl in the French provinces—with a mastery which puts him in the very first ranks of the present generation. Fifteen years his senior, F. Mauriac, who already has a long literary past behind him, has given us in Thérèse Desqueyroux, the story of a poisoning, a very moving tale in which he reveals with absolute nakedness a set of characters, severe and intensive in virtue as in sin—placing himself, by the work, with the Balzac of the *Scènes de la Vie de Province*.

Despite a genius typically French, Honoré de Balzac was not, as we might imagine, the "Paris novelist," impervious to every foreign influence. On the contrary, in a remarkable book, *Les Orientations Etrangères Chez Balzac*, M Baldensperger shows the author of *Eugénie Grandet* to have been *au courant* with all the literary and technical researches of his times, an assiduous reader of English novels from the "terror school" to Walter Scott, a follower of the scientific discoveries of Lavater and Gall and of the psychic explorations of Swedenborg, interested in Fenimore Cooper and all the foreigners who happened to be passing through Paris, and in sympathy with Goethe. Thanks to M Baldensperger we have at last a Balzac who was genuinely European, who, under the growing influence of his friend Madame Hanska, gladly wrote towards the close of his life for a public in Central Europe and particularly in Germany which proved able frequently to show him prompt and juster appreciation than his own country.

The Museum of Decorative Arts has invited us to an Exhibition of Dutch Colonial Art (Java, Sumatra, Bali, Borneo) which, aside from a very beautiful collection of old batiks, seemed to me quite poor. In view of the importance of these exhibits of primitive art to modern decorative art (for instance, there are now on sale in Paris some very beautiful fabrics, cottons, wool flannels, and so forth, as a result of the Negro exhibits of last year) I should

think it might be worth while to give the public only selected works, or in default of that a complete photographic documentation. In this respect the exposition of the Museum of Decorative Arts is inadequate.

Nor are we reassured by the Tuileries exhibit of Monet's *Nymphéas*, a pictural suite which is to become the property of the French Government. The complaint is often heard in France that modern art is rather badly represented in our national museums. But the state in acquiring the works of contemporaries chooses them for the most part from mediocre periods. So it would be better under the circumstances to keep to the past. We owe these *Nymphéas* to M Clemenceau, who has been misled by his friendship for Monet. These melting ices, shifty as to form and vulgar in colour, are in danger of being regarded later, by a public unfamiliar with museums, as a specimen of Monet's most important work; whereas they are merely interesting but unsuccessful experiments and the later manifestations of an impressionism which is declining and disintegrating. It is a great injustice to the memory of Monet.

M Darius Milhaud, the oldest of the Six—the group which sums up the whole of modern French music—offers us a curious little book entitled *Etudes* which is a résumé of French music since the war. The case of Erik Satie, of his influence upon the young musicians of the so-called Arcueil school which succeeds the *Ecole des Six*, the influence of Fauré and of Strawinsky, of Negro jazz and of the circus, are here expounded with competence and lucidity.

PAUL MORAND

# BOOK REVIEWS

## THE GOLDEN HOUSE

LOTUS AND CHRYSANTHEMUM, an Anthology of Chinese and Japanese Poetry. *Selected by Joseph Lewis French.* 8vo. 237 pages. Boni & Liveright. \$7.50.

OF the three sections into which Mr French has divided his latest anthology, the one devoted to Chinese poetry is the first and most important. The second section consists of translations from the Japanese, and the third of Western poems inspired by China or Japan. Conceivably this last section might be of critical interest, for we know that Oriental poetry has exerted a considerable influence on our own; but this influence has been generally indirect, and difficult to anthologize. Besides, one can question Mr French's choice of poems. Their orientalism, in many cases, is of the impure sort that reminds one of sitting at an inlaid table, in a Chinese restaurant, and of eating ham and eggs with chop-sticks, from a genuine Canton bowl.

Nor are the translations from the Japanese of much greater importance. There are a few old ballads, effectively translated by Mr Arthur Waley and Mr Curtis Hidden Page; but the greater part of Japanese poetry consists of brief *tanka* or still briefer *hokku*, and of these our language cannot render the allusions, the puns, the evanescent grace. They are not the ports and madeiras which are improved by a long sea-voyage. Their bouquet is delicate, easily destroyed, and they lack the rich "body" of the Chinese poems to which Mr French has devoted rather more than half his volume.

This greater emphasis is justified, for Chinese poetry has come to occupy a special position in our own literature. During the last few years it has been translated more frequently than the verse of any Western nation, except the French. Not all its magic lies in its exoticism; indeed, it seems to reply to a homely need which our own poets have failed to answer. We are familiar with so many poems of struggle, success, frustration, that we are ready to



be impressed by a literature of quietism and acceptance. Perhaps we are weary of revolting and of reaching for vague infinities. Our emotions have been simplified by the haste of a mechanical age; in some degree they have ceased to correspond to the complexities of our literature; and, in the same degree, we admire the unqualified statements of beauty which our own poets can make no longer:

"From little, little girls, they have lived in the Golden House.  
They are lovely, lovely, in the Purple Hall."

As we read of these Pleasures Within the Palace, or of Drinking Alone in the T'ao Pavilion, we imagine a contrast between the poets of the West and those of China. The first are always aiming for the impossible, and are great when they fall just short of it; the second are great by transcending a limited goal. The first seem to work in a fog shot through with lightnings; the second live in the perpetual sunlight of a Golden House—a place of measured beauties and intelligible joys, where even the sorrows that creep past the inner gate are the simple sorrows of longing, age, and separation:

"Blue mountains to the north of the walls,  
White river winding about them;  
Here we must make separation  
And go out through a thousand miles of dead grass."

Now, the importance of the present anthology is that it allows us, for the first time, to develop our imagined contrast. While reading earlier volumes we had hesitated; for, there is so great a distance between the Chinese text and even the baldest sort of English verse,<sup>1</sup> that most translators have allowed their own personalities to intrude; they have been brief or wordy, bald or flowery, modern or conventional; indeed, they have differed so widely among themselves that one poem by Li T'ai Po appears three times in

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to compare the literal translation of a fairly typical line with its rendering into English verse. The first is "Above—then—pines—wind—whistling wind—gusts of wind—a psaltery—wind in a gale." The second, in Miss Lowell's translation, reads as follows:

"On their heights, the wind whistles awesomely in the pines; it booms in great, long gusts; it clashes like the strings of a jade-stone psaltery; it shouts on the clearness of a gale."



the present collection, as translated by Mr Shigeyoshi Obata, Judith Gautier, and Amy Lowell, and gives the effect of being three separate poems. By comparing the three versions, we arrive at a fourth, which may be nearer the quality of the original. And, by comparing the work of all the fifteen translators from whom Mr French has made his selections, we are able to subtract the mannerisms of each, and to gain a more exact idea of the qualities which all were trying to convey.

For some qualities, of course, we should require a knowledge of the language, without which we can appreciate neither Chinese rhyme nor the effect of the complicated tone-patterns. We can read the maxims of Chinese critics, such as the famous adjuration to "Discard commonplace form—discard commonplace ideas—discard commonplace phrasing—discard commonplace words—discard commonplace rhymes"; but we have small means of judging what seems commonplace to the Chinese. Nor, can we distinguish what is original from what is derivative; Li T'ai Po and his ten thousand imitators have almost the same value in our eyes.

However, from the translations and valuable notes in the present anthology, we can discover many important characteristics of Chinese verse. We are impressed first of all by its air of calmness and resignation. "When the littleness of man came into hopeless conflict with the vastness of destiny," says Mr Cranmer-Byng, "there was but one way of escape for the poets and philosophers of China. It is called the Return to Harmony; it consists in identifying oneself with Nature." This idea is so nearly universal in Chinese poetry that it ceases to be a theme and becomes something implicit—a mood, an emotional category, a window which colours the world.

We are next impressed by the similarity between Chinese poetry and Chinese painting. Their verse also is an art of the foreground; an art of definite things, for which it finds analogies. "Mountains," says the painter Kuo Hsi, "make of water their blood, of grass and trees their hair, of mist and cloud their divine colouring. Water makes of mountains its face, of houses and fences its eyebrows and its eyes, and of fishermen its soul." In Chinese verse, by a similar process of analogy, every emotion becomes visible: a wife's loneliness is the blown flower that drifts through the inner door; her sorrow is the tears that soak her dress of coarse red silk; the lust for battle is the bending of bows, or the

shadow of bows in the moonlight; and the sorrow of battle is moonlight on the faces of the dead.

Not all emotion can be expressed in terms of concrete things; and it is possible to maintain that the imagism of Chinese poetry has limited its scope. There is, in any case, a contrast between its physical extent (fifty thousand poems have been preserved from the T'ang dynasty alone) and its poverty of emotions. The majority of the 177 Chinese poems in *Lotus and Chrysanthemum* deal with a very few themes, the praise of landscapes, friendship, wine; the sorrows of parting and of absence from home; the glories of philosophy, and the perils of war. It would be possible to make the list a little longer, but to Western readers it would still seem briefer than that of the neglected themes.

This second list would begin with the two great subjects of our lyric verse, for neither love nor death is often treated in Chinese poetry. Struggle, which is the theme of our epics, is also lacking, as are the epics themselves. Their poets express neither the sense of sin nor the sense of the infinite; neither the romantic revolt against society nor a romantic exultation in the terrors of nature; and they are ignorant, besides, of that search for the *new* which is the underlying motive of so great a part of modern poetry; I mean that desperate descent which Baudelaire describes:

*"Au fond de l'Inconnu pour trouver du nouveau."*

The mention of Baudelaire reminds us that most of the emotions and themes which have just been mentioned are connected in one way or another with the romantic movement. If they are qualities which specially attract us; if Baudelaire is one of our favourite poets (or Rimbaud, Shelley, Byron, Coleridge, Poe)—then we are likely to encounter Chinese poetry with tempered admiration. On the other hand, if we are attracted by the classical qualities of definiteness, harmony, and restraint, we are apt to value it more highly; indeed, we may come to regard the T'ang dynasty as the true Augustan age, and to exult in the popularity of T'ang poets as evidence that the Augustan qualities are once more returning to favour.

MALCOLM COWLEY

## MR LAWRENCE'S PROSE

MORNINGS IN MEXICO. *By D. H. Lawrence. 10mo.*  
189 pages. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

MR D. H. LAWRENCE seems to be turning himself into a kind of literary Baedeker. His *Mornings in Mexico*, a loosely knit volume of descriptive essays, is one more of his attempts to rifle the soul of a landscape and its people; as in the past he has also sought to perform the same psychoanalytic office for birds, beasts, and flowers. This is a curious thing—one can call to mind no other author who has so persistently and restlessly busied himself with a desire to get under, and into, the souls of the supposedly soulless—the souls of nations, the souls of countryside, the souls, as it were, of sticks and stones. There is something charming in this attitude, something desperate, and also something decidedly childlike. Isn't Mr Lawrence exactly like the small boy who tears a dog-rose to pieces, or a fly, or an alarm-clock, in full expectation of discovering at last the secret, not only of the particular organism, but of the world, the infinite, and God? One must admit immediately that sometimes, as in *Birds, Beasts and Flowers*, this odd attempt has provided Mr Lawrence's readers with delightful portraits, full of humour and insight. One will not soon forget his tortoises, or his goats. In his *Studies in Classic American Literature*, Mr Lawrence attempted to deal in a similar manner—a sort of inquisitorial passion—with American men of letters. In this book, one first became rather distressingly aware of Mr Lawrence's *penchant* for a semi-mystic, semi-psychological jargon of his own, a jargon not altogether happy; and one also became aware of a concurrent change, if not deterioration, in the character of Mr Lawrence's prose. It was as if at last this curious passion for pillaging souls, for ravishing out the innermost secrets of things, had become his sole preoccupation; his desire to see things naked has itself become increasingly naked, not to say brutal; his passion for understanding, for exposing, has become almost synonymous with a passion for destroying. If Mr Lawrence were merely

a psychologist, and if his violent probings and dissections were at all systematic, or anywhere pointed to a *donnée* of system, one would not so much mind this. But unfortunately, one has, everywhere in this latest phase of his work, the feeling that for Mr Lawrence the *act* of dissection is everything, the idea behind it almost nil.

At all events, it is only too apparent that with the development of this obsession for "tearing apart," Mr Lawrence's prose has, *pari passu*, become less important to him. He has been increasingly willing to sacrifice everything stylistic to his passion. It is surely no exaggeration to say that in his *Studies in Classic American Literature* his literary "manners" are, to put it baldly, bad. Justly or unjustly, one feels, on reading these pages, that Mr Lawrence is extremely patronizing; he has an air of knowing, and of being sure that he knows, very much more than his reader; he can hardly be bothered to make his assertions politely; he resorts to a truculent shorthand of style, and a habit of irritated reiteration, which make it hard for his reader to admit, without grudge, the acuteness of many of his observations. Mr Lawrence wants, for example, to tell us that he finds in Hawthorne a curious mixture of psychological profundity with superficial hypocrisy and sentimentality. But is it quite necessary for him to say "Blue-eyed Nathaniel, with his little boy charm, will tell us what's what, but he'll cover it with smarm"?

In *Mornings in Mexico*, Mr Lawrence is in a somewhat serener mood, and is dealing with material which is less apt to lead him into such repellent outbursts as this; but once again one finds oneself regretting, and regretting deeply, that the author of *Sons and Lovers* and *Women in Love* and *The Captain's Doll* should be satisfied—if one can suppose he *is* satisfied—with a prose so slipshod and journalistic. One suspects that if this book did not bear his name, it would receive little attention. It is a fair enough piece of descriptive writing, moderately colouristic—it gives one flashes of picture, suggests with occasional vividness the heat and glow and torrid torpor of the Mexican scene—but the whole thing is done carelessly, repetitiously, in a structureless and graceless prose, as if the author were entirely indifferent whether he pleased his reader or not. When he does, occasionally, give him-

self more conscientiously to a passage of description, he tends merely to heap up his colour-words, one upon another, till one is blind and deaf. His instinct for rhythm seems to have deserted him; and whereas in his earlier prose he selected the one or two details which might magically imply a whole scene, drenched with scent and sound, now he is tiresomely explicit and spares us nothing. Consider this characteristic passage from the essay entitled *Corasmin and the Parrots*:

"I like to think of the world going pop! when the lizards had grown too unwieldy, and it was time they were taken down a peg or two. Then the little humming birds beginning to spark in the darkness, and a whole succession of birds shaking themselves clean of the dark matrix, flamingoes rising upon one leg like dawn commencing, parrots shrieking about at midday, *almost* able to talk, then peacocks unfolding at evening like the night with stars. And apart from these little, pure birds, a lot of unwieldy skinny-necked monsters bigger than crocodiles, barging through the mosses; till it was time to put a stop to them. When someone mysteriously touched the button, and the sun went bang, with smithereens of birds bursting in all directions."

And then put beside it a passage from *Sons and Lovers*:

"The beauty of the night made him want to shout. A half-moon, dusky gold, was sinking behind the black sycamore at the end of the garden, making the sky dull purple with its glow. Nearer, a dim white face of lilies went across the garden, and the air all round seemed to stir with scent, as if it were alive. He went across the bed of pinks, whose keen perfume came sharply across the rocking, heavy scent of the lilies, and stood alongside the white barrier of flowers. They flagged all loose, as if they were panting. The scent made him drunk. He went down to the field to watch the moon sink under.

"A cornerake in the hay-close called insistently. The moon slid quickly downwards, growing more flushed. Behind him the great flowers leaned as if they were calling. And then, like a shock, he caught another perfume, something raw and coarse. Hunting

round, he found the purple iris, touched their fleshy throats and their dark, grasping hands."

That is a vigorous and vivid prose; and if it is obviously more formal than the colloquial *insouciance* of the later passage, it is also, just as obviously, a great deal more intimate. If it is intimacy that Mr Lawrence aims at in this recent manner of his, then it is clear enough that he has miscalculated his means. An artist of Mr Lawrence's brilliance ought to know that intimacy is not merely an affair of shedding one's clothes and one's manners. A sweet disorder—yes, by all means; but not this *farouche* condescension, this almost exhibitionistic flaunting of the "short and simple flannels of the poor."

CONRAD AIKEN

## SOME PEOPLE

SOME PEOPLE. By Harold Nicolson. 12mo. 247 pages.  
London: Constable, 7s. 6p. New York: Houghton  
Mifflin Company, \$2.50.

SOME PEOPLE is the most amusing book I have read since South Wind. Incidentally it is an attempt at a new literary form. The book consists of nine portraits of more or less imaginary figures painted against a sketchy background of actual persons. The only character—apart from the author—portrayed in any detail under his own name is Lord Curzon. But "Lambert Orme" and "Professor Malone" are not really inventions. Their features can be recognized under the false noses which the author has put on them for the sake of decency or to improve the design. Artistically it is of little importance to know where imitation ends and imagination begins. A Firbank by another name smells just as sweet. In the past memoir-writers have been content to adorn their lives with imaginary adventures. After this success of Mr Nicolson's they will add imaginary friends.

The exterior life of Mr Nicolson has been uncommonly varied and interesting. The son of Sir Arthur Nicolson, the diplomatist whom the Germans regard as a principal agent in the policy of encirclement, he was brought up in the Legation at Sofia, the Residency at Tangier, the Embassies at Constantinople and Petersburg. His earliest memory is of the station at Budapest hung with purple for the death of the Archduke Rudolph. In the intervals of riding with Bouchier in Bulgaria and watching Shereefian troops fight in Morocco, he was educated at Folkestone, Wellington, and Balliol. Entering the diplomatic service, he was *en poste* first at Madrid, then at Constantinople. He watched the Peace Conference from Mr Lloyd George's elbow, and was in attendance on Lord Curzon at Lausanne. Proust, "looking like a Goanese bridegroom," and D'Annunzio—"I could not have believed that anything not an egg could have looked so like an egg as d'Annunzio's head"—are as familiar to him as Mussolini's brown bowler, Clemenceau's lavender cotton gloves, President Wilson's black-buttoned boots, and Chicherin's mezzo-soprano voice. He has



been everywhere, met everyone. "It is odd, when I come to think of it, how many of my acquaintance have been murdered, how many have been hanged." But, as the *dégagé* tone of this remark shows, it is not as a Colonel Repington or a Le Queux hero that he wishes to present himself. If we are impressed by the background of stately homes, cipher telegrams, and official chandeliers, that is very nice for us, and for his publishers. What interests him is the character of a French *bourgeoise* who trained young Englishmen for the Foreign Office examination, the behaviour of a behaviourist in whose company he crossed the Syrian desert. He throws us the best existing description of Lord Curzon, but devotes three times as much space to Lord Curzon's valet.

In the middle distance of each portrait there is a figure that alters but remains recognizably the same, the painter himself, observant, amused, impertinently intelligent. The book would be more appropriately called *Some Nicolson*s. It is a delicate business to tell the world about oneself, and Mr Nicolson, frightened, it seems, of betraying too good a conceit of himself, inclines to poke too clumsy fun at his various selves. He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and the book is really a record of his efforts to ungag himself. The values, honourable as they were, of the station to which it pleased God to call him, gradually fell before the examination of his increasing critical intelligence. He ends, not as a Wilfred Scawen Blunt, but as a keen public servant with a hatred for incompetence and sham. "It is people like you," he breaks out to a conventionally correct colleague in the Marlborough Club, "who make diplomacy ridiculous. You simply aren't real at all: you have got no reality: you're merely bland: that's what you are, and you're smug, you're bloody smug: absolutely bloody." Mr Nicolson may disbelieve in dressing for dinner: he believes in the Union Jack. But then *Some People* only records the first half, I hope, of his life.

After reading this book—and Mr Nicolson's biographical works—I have no doubt that his chief gift is for fiction. He possesses an uncommon power of revealing the emotion behind a word or an action, of inventing the word or action that will betray an emotion. But in his biographies he cannot fully employ this power: he is too scholarly. And that is a quality in a contemporary of Mr Guedalla for which one is thankful. I suspect that he is inclined to value

his books according to the amount of work he has put into them. He is, however, at his best when he is most fluent, most conversational. He excels at drawing a person with one stroke, Lord Curzon coming on to a platform "majestically, and as if carrying his own howdah," another diplomatist with "the sickly and unwashed appearance of an El Greco page." His book on Swinburne was very painstaking: it was also ungrammatical. The writing of *Some People* was obviously a holiday to him, and it is often very swagger. Mr Nicolson is a diplomatist who writes in his spare time. Will he not indulge himself, and us, by continuing to write for fun?

RAYMOND MORTIMER

## AESTHETIC ASTIGMATISM

THE RISE OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION. By Charles A. Beard and Mary Beard. Two volumes. 8vo. 1650 pages. The Macmillan Company. \$12.50.

CHARLES AND MARY BEARD combine most of the essential qualities of the best historian. They are serious, enlightened, sensitive to injustice; they spare no pains to make their work accurate and scholarly and are temperate and judicial in their statements. Their synthesis of events is wide yet compact, and their exposition interesting. They do also what few historians have done before them, that is, include in their pages a sympathetic account of the deprivations and activities of women up to our own day. The present work differs from Professor Beard's former study of American government and his disconcerting analysis of the early history of the constitution in that it is more popular in appeal and wider in range. It accepts the economic interpretation of a country as the pivotal one on which to base any true account, and a knowledge of the methods of production as integral in the narration.

What then do we find to criticize in these impressive volumes? First, there is an almost wilful ignoring of the changing attitude toward the sex morality of girls which has gradually developed with the increasing economic emancipation of women, an attitude apparent enough in most current literature; and secondly, in that portion of their work in which they minimize America's contribution to psychology the authors have apparently overlooked the psychology of Behaviourism, which, though unpalatable to many, is nevertheless much talked of in Europe and has been included in the curriculum of some of our own Universities, a method of thought, indeed, typical of the tendencies of a mechanical age which the Beards do not fail to stress. But it is not because of these or other equally unobtrusive omissions in a book which, after all, includes so much, that we would find serious fault. The service rendered to clear and candid thinking in so tangled a field would preclude a criticism so barren.

It is, rather, toward their treatment of the subjects in which our concern is deepest, namely those of literature and the arts, that we must express our disapproval. To speak of the "vague" style of Henry James, that unrelenting master of exactitude, and to praise in contrast the "more versatile genius and more powerful improviser," Marion Crawford; to say that Stuart P. Sherman "used the language of Matthew Arnold"; and that John Singer Sargent had a "steel-like accuracy," as if such a description bore any relation to this artist's brilliant and showy canvases, is to betray an essential lack of perception which demonstrates the unfitness of these emancipated economists to enter into the more subtly imperious field of the arts. And why, since this is a history of every branch of American expression, must they turn to an English art critic for an interpretation of the newer forms when we have such excellent authorities of our own?

The Beards' own literary style may be indicated by some quotations selected at random: "the human animal as a going concern," "the ebullient and unreserved Whitman," "ordering acres of such decoration," "The Nation sputtering round in a desert," "the land of Fordismus." Here is no fine pen, no intellectual and aesthetic awareness of the difference existing between the cool, living writings of the dead English poet and essayist whose name they are so fond of bringing up in the manner of an empty slogan, and those, let us say, of Dr Canby whom they choose to mention as best exemplifying the cultured and selective literary taste of our highest criticism. And this lack of artistic insight, for one cannot say with two such unperjured patriots that it is anything else—certainly not a lack of probity—causes us to experience a certain despondency, it being once more abundantly clear that even in the circle of these two gifted authors small account is allowed for those simple values of ours, bright and clear as flame and as hard of analysis, that are best suggested by that misunderstood and difficult word "style."

ALYSE GREGORY

## BRIEFER MENTION

**THE HOUSE WITH THE GREEN SHUTTERS**, by George Douglas Brown, with introduction by George Blake (16mo, 314 pages; Modern Library: 95 cents). This grim novel of life in a small Scotch town, too little known in America, is an excellent addition to the Modern Library. Mr Blake, in his discriminating preface, suggests that it is not a "great" novel, but a "minor classic": his reservation due to his feeling that Brown's savage portraits of his fellow-countrymen were not sufficiently true to life. However one decides that point, there can be no doubt that *The House With the Green Shutters* is a powerful book, not without epic grandeur; and if the portraits verge (in the minor instances) on caricature, they are none the less effective and convincing for that. As for the central character, Gourlay, it is a masterpiece of psychological realism. It is the highest tribute to Brown's genius that he should so compel his reader to pity, and pity profoundly, the tragic career of a man so essentially detestable. And the whole bitter story is told in a prose of astonishing vigour—brilliantly sensitive, gnomic, terse, harshly poetic.

**THE HOUND-TUNER OF CALLOWAY AND OTHER STORIES**, by Raymond Weeks (12mo, 276 pages; Columbia University Press: \$2.50) contains twenty-eight narratives of the Missouri frontier, which, though not long, are quite intentionally not "short stories." Indeed the humorous author might go further. "This is not a story. It is not a history. It is a fact," he says at the beginning of one of them, for the reader to interpret how he may. And perhaps such a preface might suit them all. They are scenes from frontier lore, out of which, in spite of occasional triteness, some unpretentiously original charm is extracted.

**THE BEST CONTINENTAL SHORT STORIES OF 1925-26**, and the *Yearbook of the Continental Short Story*, edited by Richard Eaton (12mo, 336 pages; Dodd, Mead: \$2.50) does not include tales by French writers, there being a separate volume under the same editorship devoted to them. This exclusion seems to carry with it a penalty of intense gloom, for the majority of these stories sag under a burden of terror. The collection resembles a salad of bitter herbs submerged in Russian dressing. Consequently one welcomes the work of Pierre Girard, a Swiss writer, and the few others who contribute tales of lighter tone.

**ROMAN SUMMER**, by Ludwig Lewisohn (12mo, 238 pages; Harpers: \$2). There are certain books one hesitates to criticize; they are neither good enough nor bad enough, and their author, because of his unpretentiousness, disarms one's sophisticated protests. Mr Lewisohn makes his hero choose as a life companion a *proper* woman. "Louise had a deep womanliness and sanity that so-called culture and so-called refinement cannot supply, which in truth these much-vaunted things often warp and destroy."

THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF 1926 and the Yearbook of the American Short Story, edited by Edward J. O'Brien (12mo, 464 pages; Dodd, Mead: \$2.50) continues to be of undiminished merit as a yearbook, although this year it turns out to be of undistinguished merit as an anthology. Few of the stories have substance sufficient to impel one to a second reading; most of them fade from the mind with disturbing rapidity. The same indictment cannot be entered against *GEORGIAN STORIES* 1926 (10mo, 323 pages; Putnam: \$2.50) a wiser, wittier, and weightier collection, graced by the presence of A. E. Coppard, Liam O'Flaherty, and Somerset Maugham. Yet even such talents as theirs are overshadowed by the presence of E. M. Delafield and G. B. Stern, whose initials do not disclose their sex—but whose flashes of irony most happily do.

DOWN STREAM and Other Works, by J. K. Huysmans, translated from the French with a critical study by Samuel Putnam (12mo, 343 pages; Pascal Covici: \$2.50) contains in addition to the title-novel, and *Marthe*, a companion study in drift, a group of Huysmans' early Baudelairean prose poems, several critical papers including the well-known one on *Félicien Rops*, and the retrospective preface to *A Rebours*. It is the early Huysmans, the disciple of Schopenhauer, who has the pen here, for though the reader gets a glimpse of Huysmans the literary Catholic, in the *A Rebours* preface, the influence of the two novels tends to outweigh all else in the book. As it well might, for out of the diversity of good and evil that one expects in our sunken times, Huysmans selects with potent tact the items that make an acutely, a Parisianly modern picture of the *despond* which is the decline and end of the life of sense.

THE ALLINGHAMS, by May Sinclair (12mo, 368 pages; Macmillan: \$2.50) is the story of a family of six children with conventional parents growing up in more or less privileged circumstances. We become familiar with the distinctive characteristics of each boy and girl and follow them out in their diverse careers and marriages with a corresponding interest. The book is written with Miss Sinclair's accustomed solid workmanship: the structure is carefully thought out and the characters convincing. Were it not that the author lacks style, that mysterious concomitant of all great literature, we would place her extremely high amongst novelists. As it is, our respect remains unwarmed by enthusiasm.

A MARRIAGE WITH SPACE AND OTHER POEMS, by Mark Turbyfill (12mo, 110 pages; Pascal Covici: \$2). Especially in his title poem, but in some of his shorter things as well, Mr Turbyfill tries to shape for himself a poetry of idea. His preoccupation is with the epistemological problem, the problem of knowledge; and to some extent also with the elusive question of personal identity. He shows the influence of modern French poetry—particularly, perhaps, the strain we are familiar with in Jean de Boscère. But while he is ingenious, and tries extremely hard, and shows some grasp of essentials, his work too seldom takes on any of the proper speed and light of poetry: it acquires no rhythm and life of its own, no warmth, no radiance, and remains, as it begins, ingenious.



**DREAM TAPESTRY**, by Joseph Kling (8vo, 102 pages; Unicorn Press: \$1.75). A poetic commentary in twenty-two chapters is not easy to write and is not always easy to read. To this one, however, upon book-stores, art-galleries, architecture, politeness, dignity, ease, contours, colours, poverty, "Need," "Moneygrubbing," "beautiful lights," "black depths," and much else, one is not indifferent, for evinced in it throughout, are sincerity, shrewdness, and not a little fortitude.

**THE RADIANT TREE**, by Marguerite Wilkinson, with decorations by George R. Richards (10mo, 170 pages; Macmillan: \$2.50). This is an anthology of poems dealing with the "Passion and Resurrection of Christ," prefaced with a longish and diffuse introduction, in which Mrs Wilkinson seeks to emphasize the need, at the present moment, for more "faith." It is to be doubted whether a very good anthology could be made of this material. There is a singular paucity of poetry dealing with the life and death of Christ—partly, perhaps, because so seldom has the approach of the poet been realistic. But, also, Mrs Wilkinson has erred decidedly in the direction of the pretty and sentimental, including many modern poems which are trivial and third rate. And one can only wonder at the blindness of that principle of selection, which, in such a collection, can find no place for Milton's great Hymn, nor for anything of Francis Thompson.

**THE BEST POEMS OF 1926**, selected by Thomas Moulton (12mo, 120 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2). How seldom, how very seldom, in modern anthologies does one come upon poems to reward the eager anticipation with which each year we open the pages of these little books! There are flowers in this particular garland which seem wonderfully fresh. From Mr A. J. Young's poem to August we derived great delight. The book contains other admirable examples of modern verse including Padraic Colum's poem, Asses, and Edna St Vincent Millay's gallant sonnet, entitled *The Pioneer*.

**THERE'S A MOON TONIGHT, A Comedy in Three Acts**, by Alfred Kreymborg (12mo, 133 pages; Samuel French: \$1.50). **PUPPET PLAYS**, by Alfred Kreymborg (12mo, 126 pages; Samuel French: \$1.50). **ROCKING CHAIRS AND OTHER COMEDIES**, by Alfred Kreymborg (12mo, 141 pages; Samuel French: \$1.50). **LIMA BEANS**, A Scherzo Play in One Act, by Alfred Kreymborg (brochure, 12mo, 21 pages; Samuel French: 50 cents). **MANIKIN AND MINIKIN**, A Bisque Play in One Act, by Alfred Kreymborg (brochure, 12mo, 20 pages; Samuel French: 50 cents). Perhaps the best comment on these plays is the author's own—that while they may be performed either by human or wooden actors, they should always be staged "with the art of the puppet theatre as a constant though miniature model." These diminutive and charmingly fantastic paraphrases of our foibles owe something of their attraction to the well-studied ways in which they capitalize the elaborate possibilities of poetic caricature contained in the mere stage presence of a puppet. The pantomimic harmonies, the minute staccato dialogue, the miniature irony and poetry of scene and situation, suggest that whatever else he may be, Mr Kreymborg is a natural master of puppet dramaturgy.



The inspiration of *THE COLLECTED SATIRES OF LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS* (4to, 61 pages; The Fortune Press: Price not given) seems to arise solely from the circumstances of the several libel actions in which the author was at various times engaged as a result of his early associations with Oscar Wilde, and the vilifications accomplished depend on matters so peculiar to each situation as to require considerable prefatory explanation and some foot-notes besides. Such considerations tend to interfere with the reader's sharing, unreservedly, Lord Douglas' candidly stated and unequivocal views as to the satiric eminence of his couplets.

*VOLTAIRE'S THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV*, translated from the French by Martyn P. Pollack (16mo, 475 pages; Everyman's Library, Dutton: 80 cents); *THE YOUNG VOLTAIRE*, by Cleveland B. Chase (10mo, 269 pages; Longmans, Green: \$3). In the reign of Louis XIV Voltaire saw one of the four most enlightened ages of history, and to depicting the social and political life of that particular epoch he devoted his unparalleled vivacity and precision. The present-day revival of interest in the eighteenth century makes especially timely this excellent little edition of the famous book. Mr Chase's biography is particularly concerned with that epoch in Voltaire's life in which he was exiled in England. On the basis that we cannot hear repeated too often this entertaining episode of the great Frenchman, it will be welcomed. It is certainly very readable, although it is one's duty to add that it lacks in a marked degree the smooth finish and literary address which so eminently distinguish Mr Richard Aldington's rendering of the same fertile subject.

*POPES AND CARDINALS IN MODERN ROME*, by Carlo Prati, with introduction by Jean Carrère (8vo, 234 pages; Lincoln MacVeagh, Dial Press: \$3.50). This book will undoubtedly be read with considerable interest by members of the Catholic Church. It belongs to those volumes professing to give intimate glimpses of the private habits of "Princes and Prelates" and is as "realistic as the sketch of the ablest reporter." From a purely imaginative point of view it has little merit and will be received by those stiff-necked people who have never fallen under the spell of the "Apostolic Palace" with indulgent amusement.

*PALMERSTON*, by Philip Guedalla (illus., 8vo, 548 pages; Putnam: \$5). A scientifically spangled Houdini-Caruso of the archives in his employment of detail operatically as accompaniment to a general progress, Mr Guedalla has demonstrated that "the Life of Palmerston was the life of England and to a large extent, of Europe in the last sixteen years of the Eighteenth and the first sixty-five years of the Nineteenth Centuries." He has endeavoured to present a Palmerston "more cosmopolitan" than "the traditional effigy"—"more assiduous in the performance of his public duties," and more "Liberal." We thank him for having read so prodigiously as he has. Vividness is not, however, invariably synonymous with good taste, and our real debt to Mr Guedalla is for an assembled wealth of particulars rather than for vividness through implication, or for authentic impersonal reverence.

In eight fragments **THE MEMOIRS OF CATHERINE THE GREAT**, translated by Katharine Anthony from the German edition of Erich Boehme (8vo, 337 pages; Knopf: \$5) set down such thoughts and facts in review of her astounding self as the great despot thought well to commit to paper. The discourses are not confessions. They are patently designed for special consumption, and the varying narratives of the same incident suggest the masterly insight of the author, admittedly no bride of heaven, into the several natures of those for whom the accounts were intended. Yet the straightforward unapologetic way in which she often discusses things not particularly advantageous to herself has an effect of excelling bluntness, if not of sincerity, even though the reader is bound to reflect that these may be the true-accounts-that-set-false-rumour-at-rest. Evidently, one would say, it was not for nothing that Great Catherine was so charmed a scholar at the feet of the magnificent Machiavelli. This laconic matter-of-fact, this shrewd uncandid candour matches Iago's own.

**WILHELM HOHENZOLLERN, The Last of the Kaisers**, by Emil Ludwig, translated by Ethel Colburn Mayne (8vo, 528 pages; Putnam: \$5). This book was written with a poison pen. One wonders why. Perhaps it was merely to make money by appealing to the thousands who still labour under the war frenzy and who love to think, for some reason, that Wilhelm did it all. Perhaps it was a wily effort to re-establish present-day Germans in the affections of their late enemies by making their king a very complete scapegoat. But it doesn't work. The author says he quotes from Wilhelm himself and Wilhelm's friends to make out his case, but he surrounds the quotations with such insidious suspicion and leads up to them so sneeringly that innocent readers readily see villainy in them. Printed elsewhere they could have different meanings. . . . The life of the last Kaiser is still to be written.

**SIR FRANCIS DRAKE**, by E. F. Benson (8vo, 315 pages; Harper: \$4). To produce biography at once "authentic and readable" is the stated aim of the series in which the present is the initial work, and a reader can agree both that this account is respectably oriented among the facts of Drake's career, and that it is—as far doubtless as one has specific right to ask—consecutively entertaining. Conspicuously, however, it goes no further. Though not ill-proportioned, it obviously would not lose by considered reductions; yet with all its words, effect is but faintly given to the paramount colour and power which belong to the mere existence of such a man as Drake. He evidently was no ordinary type, and one would think his biographer privileged and obliged to develop some degree of theory as to his character—this quite aside from the over-acclaimed and over-done business of psychoanalysis in biography. Of all such engagements, however, a very short end is here made, in the flat assertions that Drake was a genius and that he had faith. The reader is at last forced to conclude that certain elaborately humorous references, occurring near the outset of the narrative, to the vague villains of Freudianism, were really notice given that no undertakings would be undertaken in any but the most obvious sort of character depiction.

**THE PORTRAIT OF PASCAL**, by Mary Duclaux (10mo, 232 pages; Harper: \$4) impresses the reader as rather unfortunately titled. The author disclaims any attempt at "biography." "Biography," however, though much abused, is a large, comfortable, and convenient term and would seem better suited to this earnest, detailed account of the facts of Pascal's life than "portrait." "Portrait" suggests the taking of a likeness, and a strikingly eloquent likeness of the intellectual and spiritual supremacy of Pascal the present work is not.

**THE POCKET OXFORD DICTIONARY**, compiled by F. G. Fowler and H. W. Fowler, American Edition revised by George Van Santvoord (16mo, 1029 pages; Oxford University Press, American Branch: \$2) is an abridgement of *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* arranged for the use of American readers. Although precedence is given to American spelling the English spelling is included as well. For those who take particular pleasure in studying etymologies the bareness of the statements concerning the origins of the words will perhaps prove slightly disappointing. But this is of negligible importance compared to the extreme value of such a dictionary. It is small, bound more firmly than its English model, and can be kept beside one for reference on the narrowest desk or writing-table.

**NORSE MYTHOLOGY, Legends of Gods and Heroes**, by Peter Andreas Munch, in the Revision of Magnus Olsen, translated from the Norwegian by Sigurd Bernhard Hustvedt (12mo, 397 pages; American-Scandinavian Foundation: \$2.50) is a compendious account of the old Germanic mythology, as it has been handed down in Norse mythological poetry. Part I relates briefly and with brief comment the various myths of Odin, Thor, Balder, Loki, and others of *Æsir*, the creators of nature and men. Part II deals in the same manner with the heroic legends, such as those of the Volsungs and Nibelungs. Part III is a compact description of the temples, sacrifices, and modes of worshipping the old gods. The notes of Professor Olsen, which, together with his correlations and improved readings, bring the significant work of his predecessor up to date, have been translated and included. There is also a short bibliography of works in the field of Norse and Germanic mythology.

**THE DIALOGUES OF PLATO**, From the Third Jowett Translation, edited with an introduction by William C. Greene (8vo, 535 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$3.50) contain robust selections from eighteen of the dialogues, including the *Republic*, the *Symposium*, and that trilogy of the trial and death of Socrates—the *Apology*, the *Crito*, the *Phaedo*—which is so complete a treatise on the art of manliness. The editor has included such improvements on the Jowett readings as scholarship has devised since Jowett's day; and in his general and his eighteen special introductions, he does probably as much as can be done to make easy the way of the modern reader. That way is hard enough, for as Thoreau aptly, though somewhat bitingly remarks, "The heroic books, even if printed in the character of our mother tongue, will always be in a language dead to degenerate times."

## COMMENT

*The religion of literature is a sort of Pantheism. You never know where the presence of the Divine may show itself, though you should know where it has shown. And you must never forbid it to show itself, anyhow or anywhere.*

GEORGE SAINTSBURY

IF our choice in youth were the choice of age and our choice in age were that of youth our usefulness to ourselves would be doubled. We value the modern spirit of *The Manchester Guardian* as depending on the un-aging discernment of Mr C. P. Scott whose eighty-first birthday occurs this October. No work of art certainly is old which was ever new, as no one is dead who ever was alive.

It is reasonable to expect to find in the young more sap than in the old and inexperience is not always crassness. In undergraduate magazines for example, there is often more to detain one than there is in the popular product with which the news-dealer papers his cubicle. Not that youthful impetus is always admired or is always able to admire itself. An early editor of the *Oxford Undergraduate* seems to have felt aloofly distinct from what he regarded as "the Careless or greater division of non-reading men," from "the Philosophers" who "will not enter into any plan of study because they do not see the *good* of it," from "Quacks" and "Procrastinators"—indeed from most of his fellow gownsmen in each of whom he had expected to find a savant, a genius, or a wit. "My ideas of their conversation," he says, "were taken from the humour of Addison and of their customs from the rules in the Statute Book." It must be admitted that Oxford undergraduates of our own day sometimes lend their attention to specimens from America of what might be called our rag and bone fiction—not that we may easily scorn Oxford for reading what Yale or Harvard has written. We need not be seriously horrified by scholastic digressions, cultural playfulness, or intellectual wastefulness of aesthetic abundance. The unprecedented sybari-

tism at Harvard for instance, of the brother of the late President Eliot in having dared when an undergraduate to add a carpet to his room-furnishings seems not to have presaged perdition. The past has not at any time been entirely without liveliness and no period was ever without resemblance to other periods—our own age included. Gabriell Harvey's report of intellectual assumptiveness at Cambridge applies equally to our halls of residence:

"all inquisitue after Newes, newe Bookes, newe Fashions, newe Lawes, newe Officers, and some after newe Elementes, and some after newe Heauens, and Helles to. . . . Castels builded in the Ayre: much adoe, and little helpe: Iacke would faine be a Gentlemanne: in no age so little so muche made of, euery one highly in his owne fauour, thinking no mans penny so good siluer as his own: . . . but Agent, and Patient muche alike, neither Barrell greatly better Herring. . . . Olde men and Counsailours amongst children: Children amongst Counsailours, and olde men: Not a fewe dubble faced Iani, and chaungeable Camelions: ouer-manye Clawbackes, and Pickethanks: Reeds shaken of euerie Wind: Iackes of bothe sides: Aspen leaues: painted Sheathes, and Sepulchres: Asses in Lions skins: Dunglecockes: slipperye Eles: Dormise: I blush to thinke of some, that weene themselves as fledged as the rest, being, God wot, as Kallowe as the rest:"

"The younger American writers" are accused of "a pseudo-hardness and clarity of mind which makes sharp distinctions and is really singularly inexpressive." Certain of the most presentable specimens of modern art are called "sophisticated, modern, trivial" and the even graver charge is brought against us of being nothing and of being too much—of not being serious and of being indecent. We seem so conspicuously to have outstripped our best champion of a "natural morality"—George Moore—that he says or is quoted as saying, "Now I can't keep up with them and don't want to. They have made it all so carnal."

Should we be tweaked by these compliments, it is still truer perhaps that we have not been quenched. The striving for "a reasoned form," the maintaining of a toehold upon progress, our manifold ferocities and ungainly graces, are after all a corollary to momentum. It is common sense, rather than blindness to Dean Inge's spiritual significance, that sustains us under the somewhat aggres-

sively withering remark that "It is not necessary to 'make' a cubist or a free-verse writer; he has unfortunately been 'born.' " And one recalls in good part the fearless effacing of futurism and cubism by Theodore Roosevelt: "There is no reason why people should not call themselves Cubists, or Octagonists, or Parallelopedonists, or Knights of the Isosceles Triangle, or Brothers of the Cosine, if they so desire; as expressing anything serious and permanent, one term is as fatuous as another. . . . The paleolithic artist was able to portray the bison, the mammoth, the reindeer, and the horse with spirit and success, while he still stumbled painfully in the effort to portray man. This stumbling effort in his case represented progress, and he was entitled to great credit for it. Forty thousand years later, when entered into artificially and deliberately, it represents only a smirking pose of retrogression and is not praiseworthy."

Our attachment is to the art of Egypt and the Primitives rather than to the later Renaissance and to Impressionism and many of us are "not praiseworthy." Our apparently conglomerate methods and our wilfulness are, however, not so hurtful we hope as to some elegant and seemly minds they are distasteful. One has, like the inaugurator of *The Oxford Student* in 1750, a feeling for being one's self and if as is possible in the subsequent progress of art, we should never be heard of, we cannot in advance regret our eclipse nor anticipating it, spare diligence. And with this student, should it be our good fortune, at the moment or later, to have "disgusted the frivolous, abashed the vicious, and awed the virtuous," we cannot be sorry.

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